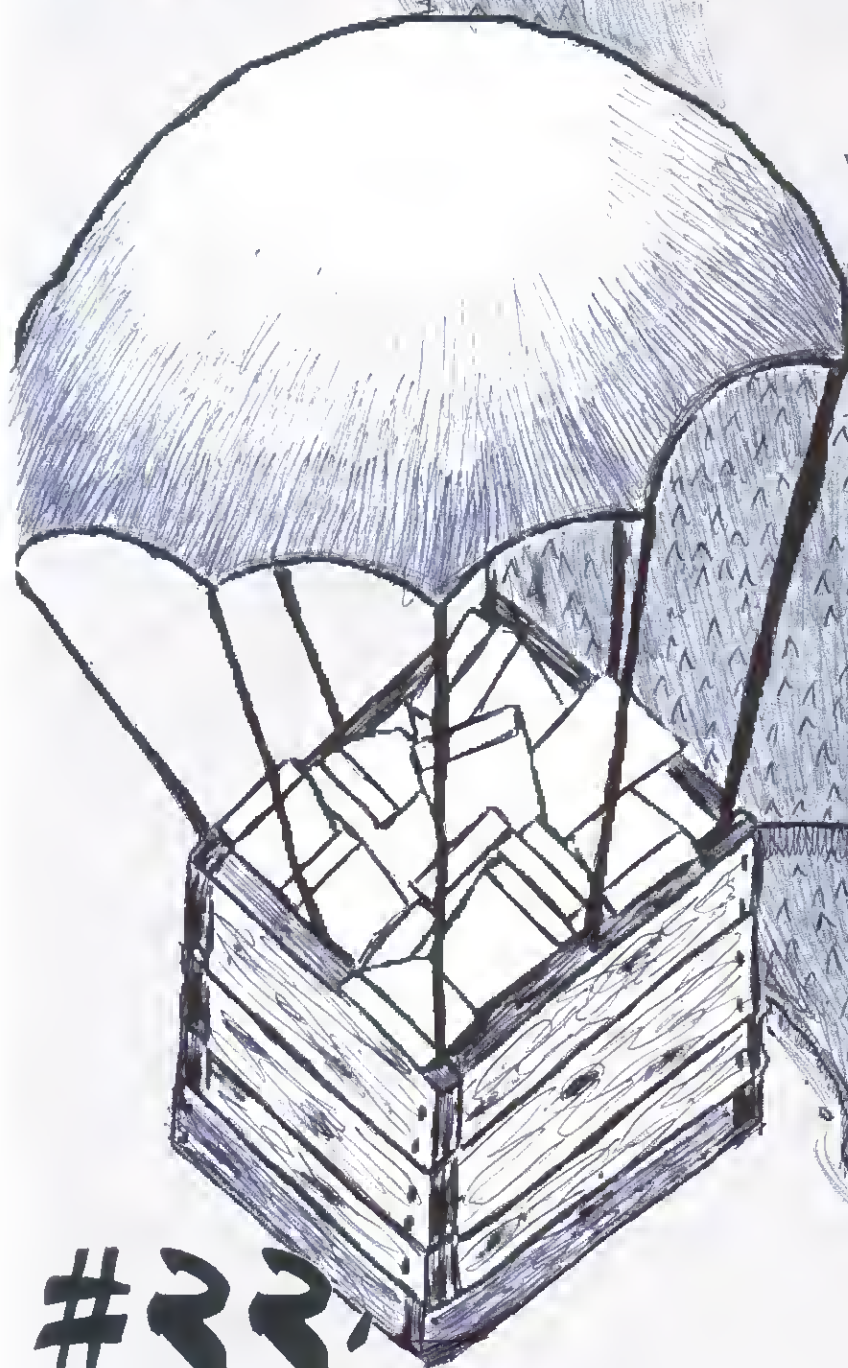


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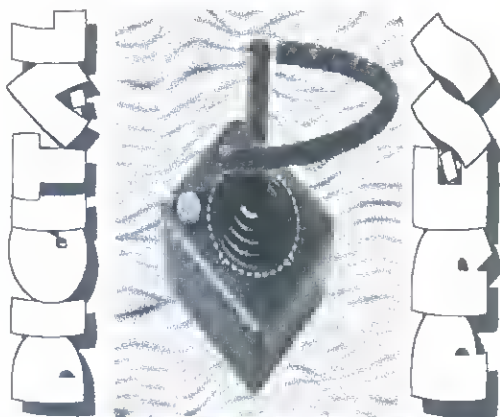


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DIGITAL PRESS #33 SEP/OCT 1997

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SUBSCRIPTION INFO

Digital Press is published bi-monthly, six regular issues per year. Subscription rate for the U.S. \$10.00, Canada \$12.00, Outside North America \$16.00. Single issue rate: \$1.75

BACK ISSUES

Available for \$1.50 each. See elsewhere in this issue for details.

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IMPORT.

EDITOR'S BLURB by Joe Santulli

You know, this has nothing to do with this issue or even video gaming in general, but I have to know what this means: I have been humming the theme song to "Josie and the Pussycats" for three days straight now. It is driving me mad! I turn the radio all the way up to drown it out but as soon as a song ends it's "the Pussycats in Outer Space" all over again. What does it mean? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

It COULD mean I've been working too long. But it feels really good to get Digital Press out to the people again. This issue marks our first offering as the "new team" - last issue was a hodgepodge of old material, new material, and stuff from our web page. It's the rookie season for most of these guys as some veterans hang up their spikes for the last time (charter members Bill "Alternate Currents" Schultz and Karl "April Fools" Youngman have decided to take their talents elsewhere). We'll miss Bill and Karl, but I'm also really excited about the new kids on the block (please please please don't think what I think you're thinking).

Foreign games never really appealed to me. On the Atari 2600 where foreign games are plentiful you have to deal with the weird PAL / NTSC incompatibility thing. I really don't have fun when I'm behind my television set trying to find the vertical hold knob. I mean, it's just this tiny little knob and there's so many wires back there. It spooks me. I don't wanna get electrocuted and die. Yes, that's why I hate foreign games. Fear of electrocution.

Lately, though, there has been a rise in games that will never see our mainland, and they'll only be appreciated by foreigners. We all know THEY can never understand video gaming like WE do. Why don't we just sail over there, take over their crummy towns and force them to speak english so we can all play the same great stuff!? I hate the fact that I'll never know what the characters in Tobal 2 are saying, or that I have to bet in YEN on a horse race (Virtua Gallop). Let's give 'em a taste of good ol' American firepower! Let's make ALL games AMERICAN games! Yeah, now THAT's a cause worth fighting for!

So by now you're either thinking "what an ignoramus" or just "what an idiot" (that would be the same as last issue), but then again you paid for this. And I plan to see to it you get your money's worth. Inside these pages are some of the best columns I've seen in DP, courtesy of our crafty vets (I love AL's column, and Sean is on the money as usual) and upstart rookies (that Keita can write, and Clint is all over the place). I have once again revealed more about my past than I care to (see page 17), and we pulled together a killer "FAVORITE 99 CLASSICS" list that I think you'll really enjoy.

Time to roll. Sorry I had to cut out the letters page. Write us with your comments and I promise to get them in next issue. Until then...

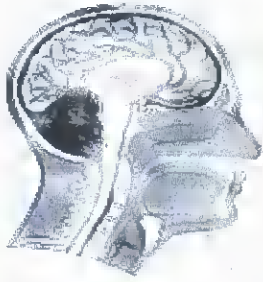
On The Cover

Coming To America
Artwork by Joe Santulli

I absolutely cannot draw the United States (sometimes it looks like an unhealthy cow, and that's on a good day), so I got some help from an Atlas scan and a little bit of tracing. Yes, I traced. There. The whole facade has finally been exposed.

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The Wacky World of



Questions, Questions

by Al Backiel

I have been writing articles on video games for many years now. I have read all I could on the subject. I've played hundreds of games and always strived to max them out. Even still I don't profess to know anywhere near everything there is to know on the subject. As a matter of fact there are many questions that I don't have answers for. So I thought this column would be a good forum to lay them all out on the table. Hopefully, our readers may be able to provide some insight. A programmer, or a person with inside information, or a video gamer based on his/her personal experiences might be able to help. I have included the names of the programmers involved when known. Somebody out there may know them personally or know where to find them on the Internet. Here then are my top 10 video game questions:

Is Impossible Mission (7800) really impossible?

Here is a game that can be mapped out without too much trouble. The object in a nutshell is to find all 36 puzzle pieces scattered throughout the game, so they can form 9 completed puzzles of 4 pieces each. This is supposed to yield a 9-letter password to open the control room door and win the game. The trouble is there are only 23 puzzle pieces attainable. Even if you consider the upper corner of the one screen that seems to be unreachable, there still wouldn't be enough pieces. All 32 rooms are accounted for. Is the game incomplete? There was a C-64 version. Maybe that can provide some clues.

What is the final "dessert" in Taz (2600)?

You have to run through the game completely 3 times to see it. This is extremely hard to do. My best effort was between 1 and 2 times. The only person I heard of coming close was Sean Kelly who got through over 2 times.

What is the significance of the hidden password "TEALPEHN" in Blueprint (2600)?

The manual refers to it as a "clue to up and comings surprises from CBS Games". Is it referring to a future release? The password can be anagrammed into "elephant". The only elephant game I ever heard of was Dumbo's Flying Circus, so that can't be it. What the heck were they working on?

At the end of Quest For Quintana Roo (2600), what is the "fraction" 18/30 supposed to mean?

After solving the map rock jigsaw

puzzle correctly, this cryptic "treasure" appears. Other than the fact that it can be reduced to three-fifths, I'm at a loss. No, it has nothing to do with the catalog number.

What the hell does it take to kill the final boss in Midnight Mutants (7800)?

It is hard enough fighting your way through a cavern that is crawling with demons to reach this guy. You have to have plenty of reserve strength. You need a very detailed map or an excellent memory. Dr. Evil must be hit in his weak spot repeatedly. The problem is you don't know where this is, so you fire away until you die. With the other bosses you at least were given hints.

How does one uncover the "Easter egg" in California Games (2600)?

I only have myself to blame for this issue. I saw it, I reported it to a few of my fellow collectors. But, to this day, I don't know how I did it. I found it soon after I bought it, so I thought it was commonplace. I did not take any notes, nor do I remember the steps taken or what character name was chosen. I do vividly remember it was during the half-pipe competition and it popped up in place of the score after a series of high jumps. It was a sort of hamburger shape containing the programmer's initials (SAB). Anyone who knows how to read 2600 code and would like to take a crack at solving this, I can provide with a copy of the listing. I am an IBM mainframe programmer, so it's Greek to me. I planned to someday, somehow learn the code. This has been bugging me and I would like to get to the bottom of this as soon as possible. [Programmed by M. Peter Engelbrite & Steve A. Baker]

Is there a second screen/level in Ghostbusters II (2600)?

This game I believe was started by Activision and sold overseas by Salu. It is PAL and was/is available from Telegames England. The box shows an additional screen containing The Statue of Liberty moving through the streets like a float. There are several references to a second screen throughout the instructions. The object of the game is to descend to the bottom of a shaft by moving from side to side while fending off enemies and collecting prizes. You must also complete a slime scooper along the way. After reaching the bottom,

you are supposed to dig for a slime sample. What happens is you that you keep digging and digging until time runs out. The manual is unclear as to how this is supposed to work.

Do the Crypts of Chaos (2600) have an exit or a final screen? If so, when and where? The maps for the 4 possible mazes were published in DP #31. I did the mapping and Joe Santulli made it look real nice with wallpaper and such. The four mazes repeat in sequence for x number of levels. The manual states "Consider yourself a Noble if you can descend to Floor 18 and still get out alive". Notice it is not saying specifically that this will end the game. It is also saying that you still have to get out alive. Does this mean resurfacing by going all the way back? God, I hope not! I got pretty far by starting on the lower levels rather than the higher because it allowed me to build up my reserves.
[Programmed by John W.S. Marvin]

In Grover's Music Machine (2600 prototype), what are the selections? At the risk of sounding like I'm regressing back to my childhood, I'm still curious as to the song titles. Grover plays a little tune and does a little dance for almost every letter of the alphabet. I find myself unavoidably playing "Name-That-Tune". Reminds me of Joe's Sound Bytes on the Web. Now where have I heard of that sound before? Here is what I think I'm hearing. Any corrections or fill in the blanks will be appreciated:
A= Old McDonald Had A Farm
B= Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

C= Here We Go Round The Mulberry Bush
D= Over The River And Through The Woods
E= Hush Little Baby
F= The Itsy Bitsy Spider
G= ?
H= Skip To My Lou
I= Three Blind Mice
J= Hickory Dickory Dock
K= Do You Know The Muffin Man?
L= A-Tisket, A-Tasket
M= ?
N= ?
O= I'm A Little Teapot
P= ?
Q= This Old Man
R= The Farmer In The Dell
S= ?
T= ?

Have the following contests been resolved?
Swordquest:Waterworld - No record of prizes or certificates known yet.

Rescue Terra I - \$5,000 first prize in playoff competition.
Defend Atlantis - \$40,000 in total prizes in high score playoff.
\$10,000 first prize. **Popeye** - scratch off card = Popeye arcade machine or t-shirt.
Keystone Kapers - scratch off card = \$5,000 savings bond or other prizes.

Name This Game - \$10,000 first prize. Winner has been reported as Galleon's Gold, Treasure of the Deep, Guardian of the Deep or was it something else????

Death Star Battle Sweepstakes - Simple quiz. First Prize = Star Wars Arcade Game, Second Prize = Darth Vader phone, Third Prize = Ewok Adventure cart (yeah right!) Fourth Prize = Return of the Jedi baseball cap
Any winners out there? Write us.

CATCH UP WITH DIGITAL PRESS - BACK ISSUES \$1.50

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#18: **FOOLISH:** April Fools' 1994.
#19: **RUSH:** Collectors: hobbyists or bid-dies?; Jess Ragan's Land of Rare & Exotic Coin-Ops pt 2; The GameLine System; Classic "Panic Games".
#20: **ALTERNATIVES:** Classic Videogame

Board Games; SCES '94 Coverage; Videogame Trading Cards II; Classic Knick-Knacks; Name This Game Contest; Fanzine X-ing with The Laser.
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#22: **REQUISITION:** Adult Video Games; Fanzine X-ing with Infestation; Classic Favorites; Video Game Cartoons; Way of the Warrior Survival Guide; Sega Master System US Cartridge Listing; Tribute to the "Old" Atari; Guide Addendum 3.01.
#23: **BRAIN:** Top Ten Brain Games; ROMpage "Sega Hates Us"; PsychOphile Brain Games; Guide Addendum 3.02
#24: **PAC:** Pac-Man Collectibles; Pac-Man Oddities; Pac-Man Reviews; Guide Addendum 3.03.
#25: **SPORT:** Unusual Sports in Video Games; Whatever Happened to Pleasant Valley Video Games?; ROMpage "Drought"; Alternate Currents: Running Your Own Sports League; Guide Addendum 3.04.
#26: **TRASH:** Silicon of the Damned; The 40 Worst Classics; Bad Influences in Videogames; DP Staff Bottom 10's of All Time; Guide Addendum 3.05; Collectible

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#28: **RECYCLE:** Recycled Game Titles; Golden Age Recycles; DP Index; Guide Addendum 3.06; Scavenger Hunt III; Sportsman's Paradise.
#29: **LOST:** TV Boy Review; Video Game Jukeboxes; ROMpage 32 Bit Ware; 75 Games You Might Have Missed; Classic Sleepers; Guide Addendum 3.07; Why Prices?
#30: **BLURB-A-THON:** The Game Closet Recreated; Mr. Do! FAQ; Hollywood Looks at Video Games Continued; Interview with John Dondzila - Vectrex programmer; Virtual Boy Flash; Atari: What Went Wrong?; Stuff To Do This Summer.
#31: **SUMMER:** Play ColecoVision on your PC; Odyssey2/Odyssey3 FAQ; Crypts of Chaos Strategy Guide; Fighting Game comparisons; ROMpage - DP Staff in Turmoil?
#32: **SUMMER:** PsychOphile: Cool Classics; DP Staff Profile '97; ROMpage: Addiction?; DP Guide Update 4.01.

Santulli vs. Santulli

"Once Upon Atari"

I've had the recent pleasure of hooking up with one of my game design heraes, Howard Scott Warshaw (Yar's Revenge, Raiders of the Lost Ark, E.T.). Mr. Warshaw got together with some buddies and produced the first in a set of four videos exploring life at Atari. The series is called "Once Upon Atari", and this installment is called "The Agony and the Ecstasy". He asked us to review the video here at DP. Liz and I popped some popcorn, kicked our feet up, and took it all in. Here's our honest take.

Good Cop: Joe Santulli

For video game players, there is a certain awe inspired by the game designers of the golden age of gaming – or maybe that's just me. I can remember as a kid the wonder and amazement of popping a new game in for the first time and being completely absorbed by it. Actually, it probably IS just me, because I think I STILL do that. The miracle of the classics, however, is that most of these games were designed by just ONE person. They didn't have teams of programmers, graphic artists, sound men, and directors to pull a project together. Rob Fulop wrote the code for the Atari VCS version of Missile Command, he did it all by himself. It is the appreciation of these early designers' talents that make the new video "Atari: The Agony and the Ecstasy" a thoroughly entertaining piece of work.

The video, which features about a dozen game designers from the early days of Atari, highlights the pros and cons of being an Atari programmer in the late 1970's and early 1980's. It decidedly steers clear of discussing Atari management but focuses instead on the work at hand, specifically, programming the Atari 2600 VCS. The video is introduced and narrated by Howard Scott Warshaw, the guy who brought us *Yar's Revenge*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark* (both reviewed here in this issue), and *E.T.*, and introduces a motley crew of men (and woman) deeply involved in the developmental years of the Atari home experience. Among them: Larry Kaplan, designer of *Air-Sea Battle* and *Street Racer*; Bob Polaro, who brought *Defender* to the home screen; Dave Staugas, programmer of the magnificent VCS conversion of *Millipede*; and Tod Frye, who gave us the very forgettable *Pac-Man* and *Swordquest: Fireworld*.

A classic gamer's dream, the video recaps - through a series of interviews - the creativity and cunning it took to pull the job off. Most everyone confesses that programming for limited Atari 2600 was a painstaking, laborious process. If you're into the technical aspects of the Atari 2600, you can't miss this video. You'll understand why so FEW people were involved in its success.

MY only wish was that there were more storytelling here. There are few "highlights" on this tape, and that could just be because it's very short (approximately 30 mins), but I really would have liked to hear about some of the antics that I'm certain happened behind the scenes. Yes, I can imagine it was very difficult to get some of those amazing games into just 2K of ROM... but what about the people involved? We get a little personality out of Rob Zdybel ("Star Trek"), Tod Frye (who admits on camera to conceiving 2600 *Xevious* while on drugs), and Rob Fulop (who openly uses the F word as he praises

Space Invaders designer Rick Mauer), but the rest of the process is very fact-based. You really want these guys to cut loose and have a good time on camera!

The production is very good, obviously the work of a professional (not at all like those cheesy Digital Press videos!), with clean editing, music, titles identifying the people, and lots of quick takes at actual gameplay, early photos, and other interesting relics. From a gamer's perspective – someone who feels like they "grew up" with the people on this video, this gets a thumbs up. Highly informative but just a little too short.

Bad Cop: Liz Santulli

Unlike my husband, I was NOT a video game player my whole life. Even now, it takes something special to get me to play. So when Joe asked me to watch and critique a videotape about Atari, I was less than thrilled.

The good news is, I enjoyed it. Here you have a bunch of people who were challenged by their job, and don't mind sharing it with everyone. I couldn't really tell if anyone on the video actually knew anyone else on the video, though (except Rob Zdybel and Carla Meninsky, who share one of the few "stories" on the tape). Still, hearing about how difficult it was to make games for the Atari makes you think these people must have been extremely talented.

The trouble for a person like me who doesn't automatically know who these people are is that it just seems like a bunch of people talking about their job. And I can get that just about anywhere I go. Joe expressed to me that these people are "the pioneers of the industry", but I never really got that from watching the video. There is a lot of technical talk but very little of it was educational. I was hoping that right after someone would say something like "there are 76 cycles to program the image process", that a quick diagram would pop up showing me what that means. There are a few cases where I got to see a game (being played) that one of the designers was talking about, but not nearly enough visual stuff of this kind was given. 90% of the program is someone's face on the screen.

I'm giving the video a thumbs down because it almost – but doesn't – appeal to someone who wasn't playing Atari in the early 80's. I would say to Howard Scott Warshaw that when you put your next video together, try to think about people like me, who care about your work but missed the details. I almost hate to say this – but take a lesson from Howard Stern. He made a movie I really enjoyed even though I have no interest in the subject. It's an example of a program that is entertaining and you don't have to know a thing about the subject beforehand.

How to Get "Once Upon Atari"

Once Upon Atari: The Agony and the Ecstasy, is the only opportunity ever to hear the inside story of Atari from the people who worked there and made the games. People like me.

I was sick of hearing empty truthless watered down reports of what Atari was like. Atari was an AMAZING place to be, and no one has ever told the story. So I became a video producer to tell this story. Everyone interviewed in this tape worked at Atari during the late 70's and early 80's, the BIG times at Atari. You will hear everything that really happened in the words of the people who made it happen.

Once Upon Atari is a four part series. The first episode will cover the environment and people, the second will detail our dealings with marketing and management and all that money, the third will go into the intricacies of game design.

The fourth episode, which is the first to be produced and available, is "The Agony & the Ecstasy." This episode reveals the technical details and difficulties of actually programming the 2600. It also shows the wonderful and exciting rewards of having your work distributed and appreciated by the public. There is also a segment on the favorite games of the game makers.

This episode is dedicated to classic gamers, the people without whom Atari could never have existed. It is full of technical information that can only be appreciated by serious enthusiasts. It is to these people that I (and all Atari alums) owe their fantastic journey. It seemed appropriate to make my first production for these people.

So I did.

Every classic gamer that has seen it has the same reaction: "It's unbelievable! Every real gamer must have it!". Just ask them. Electronicon attendees witnessed the debut. They'll tell you it is truly a great gaming experience.

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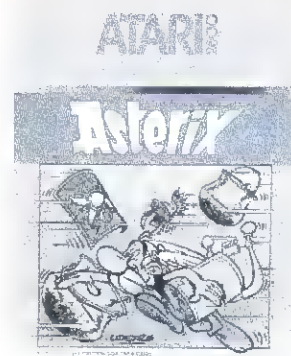
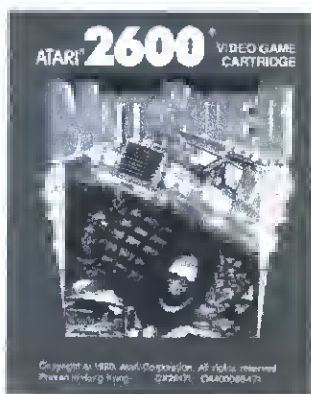
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Alien Boxes

We dug into our collections and uncovered some "Foreign" boxes for Atari 2600 games that you won't come across every day. Look for more scattered around this issue.



KEITA GOES TO TOKYO: DP OVERSEAS UPDATE

BY KEITA IIDA

(WITH SILLY PHOTO TEXT BY JOE SANTILLI)

This past June, I took my annual trip to Japan to do the usual - visit my relatives, in-laws and friends, along with my favorite Japanese pastime, game hunting, and of course engage in my favorite Japanese pastime...

I'm not going to bore you with details about my excursions to various Temples, family outings, or the finer restaurants in Tokyo, since that's not what we're here for. So let me discuss the gaming scene over in Japan, starting with what is arguably the world's hottest place to find new and used video game stores.

Akihabara is a district in Tokyo where you can find just about anything that feeds off of electricity. DVDs, computers, washing machines, televisions, stereos, cellular phones, music CDs, and yes, video games. What separates Akihabara from other electronic locales in Japan and the US is the way the stores promote their wares. Every one from men with loudspeakers to pretty young high school and college girls dressed in frilly skirts are out to grab your attention and lure you into their stores! At night, Akihabara becomes the Japanese equivalent of Las Vegas as the entire neighborhood glitters with billboards and neon signs.

Once you can pry your eyes away from the circus-like atmosphere (and girls) of Akihabara, you're ready to embark on a big-league quest to satisfy all your gaming needs. As you exit the Akihabara train station, one of the first places that'll catch your eye is a massive Sega arcade which is always packed with gaming freaks who want to check out the latest and greatest coin-op games. The first floor contains the newest games from the likes of Sega, Namco, Konami and Capcom. I was awestruck at the technology incorporated in games like *House of the Dead* (Sega), *Scud Racer* (Super GT), *Tokyo Wars* and *Le Mans 24*, Sega's awesome new Model 3 racing game. Where the real action takes place, however, is in the lower level where rows and rows of fighting games are lined up for hard-core gamers to duke it out. *Vampire Savior* (Darkstalkers 3) and *Virtua Fighter*



*Yes, the street life of Akihabara:
Pornography, firearms, and of course video games.*

3 had especially large audiences, with each game having its own overhead 30-inch monitor for the observers to watch the game separately from the players. I'm no *Virtua Fighter* slouch myself, so I took part in a few battles before I was quickly disposed of by some awfully dexterous teens. On to the stores....

The vast majority of video game stores line a two-block area of Akihabara. It's a gamer's paradise, with one dedicated video game shop after another. Just about every store stocks Super Famicom, (SNES), Saturn, Playstation, Nintendo 64 and Gameboy items, while some stores also carry the Neo Geo and Neo Geo CD, PC Engine (TurboGrafx-16), NEC PC/FX, 3DO, Megadrive and Game Gear. What about prices, you say? Surely with the sheer amount of game stores you'd expect to get killer bargains, right? Well, yes and no. For the newer consoles like the Playstation and N64, prices aren't going to vary much from a store that's in another city in Japan. However, when you DO find the cheap goods in the used game sections of the stores (usually on the upper floor), you'll find various 16-bit and older 32-bit titles sitting around, heavily discounted. For example, I picked up *Arkanoid* and *Final Fantasy 5* (a terrific Square RPG that was

sadly not released here in the states) for \$12 and \$15, respectively. Some other bargains to be found were Playstation *Nichibutsu Arcade Classics* (\$30), Irem *Classics* (\$16) and *Race Drivin'* for the Saturn (\$8). Items with so-so prices that I ended up grabbing anyways were *Lode Runner: The Legend Returns* (\$40) and *Lode Runner Extra* (\$42) for PS, and *Elevator Action Returns* for Saturn (\$26). One thing you'll notice about the Japanese are that they keep their games in immaculate condition. Over 90% of Super Famicom and Megadrive games were in mint condition with box and instructions, so you're essentially getting a new game. There's no shrinkwrap on



A small child is lured into the dark and forbidding world of gaming. Moments later he is gone in a puff of fire and brimstone.

Super Famicom and Mega Drive games, either.

Two years ago, I predicted that games for the Famicom (NES),

PC Engine and older systems would skyrocket in value as twen-tysomethings in Japan started becoming nostalgic about their classics and began to collect old games. Well, this is quickly becoming the case. Famicom games, in particular, are in reasonable demand as I saw prices bordering on the extreme. One store was even auctioning a complete boxed Namco library of games for the Famicom! Bids were entered at the store, with the store taking down a small deposit from the (current) high bidder. Although the bid at the time I was there was "only" \$600 for the 45+ game set, the fact that auctions were being held in stores goes to show that cart collecting in Japan is now in full swing. Not all stores, however, were charging big bucks for Famicom games. I managed to scoop up the following titles for US \$10 or less:

Ballblazer (it exists!), **Crazy Climber**, **Space Invaders**, **Mappy**, **Mother**, **Fire Emblem**, **Goemon (Mystical Ninja)**, **Dragon Buster**, **Elevator Action**, **Barcode Battler**, **Dragon Ball Z**, **Godzilla**, **Tetris 2 + Bombliss** and **Bloody Warriors**, all complete with boxes and instructions. Later, I picked up roughly 30 more games from a store that was blowing out some of the later Famicom releases.

Among the 16-bit systems, since the Super Famicom was far and away the most dominant machine, games are easily found. A few games, however, are next to impossible to get. Last year, I went searching for **Nichibutsu Arcade Classics**, a compilation cart which featured **Crazy Climber**, **Moon Cresta** and **Frisky Tom**, and came back empty handed. The first store I visited this year not only had one available, but it was new in box for \$25! In Japan, the Megadrive was an also-ran, having been beaten not only but the Super Famicom, but also soundly trounced by the PC Engine as well. Therefore, games for the Megadrive are very difficult to find, but when they are, they're CHEAP. I spotted **Space Invaders '90** for \$12, **Langrisser 2** for \$10, and **Phantasy Star** for \$8. The PC Engine still has a large following of hardcore gamers, and a handful of titles are still trickling out for it. **Dragon Knight IV** was released the week I got to Japan, with many stores stocking a large quantity of the game. However, some of the older games are insanely priced. I saw one store selling **Darius Alpha** for \$295, and another store selling it without instructions for \$250. Similarly, **Sapphire**, a polygon (!) shooter from Hudson, had an asking price of \$299 from the one store that I spotted it. The PC Engine is clearly the collector's choice as far as Japanese gamers are concerned.

What about the classics, you say? Before I get into the availability (or lack thereof) of the older system and games, one must remember that the Japanese treat old and unused items differently than people in the U.S. Until about two years ago, thrift stores, second hand shops and flea markets were nonexistent. Why? Because the society considers it an embarrassment if people rummage around

for used junk. If they want to buy something, they buy something new and of high quality. If your peers noticed that you were purchasing things from advertisements in the local paper, you would probably be ridiculed for being a "cheapskate." Although this ideology has subsided somewhat, there are still not many outlets in Japan for people to trade/sell used items. So what did people do with their old stuff before the recent advent of flea markets? They threw them away! Needless to say, Pong units and Famicom carts are not as abundant as you might expect in present-day Japan.



Natives and tourists alike flock to the nearest game shops. This isn't one of them, however. This is the front of Digital Press HQ on "Jet Moto" Day

Trying to remain optimistic despite having no luck finding the Famicom Disk Systems and Sega Mark IIIs of the world, I finally stumbled across a run-down mom and pop shop at the edge of the Akihabara strip. To my surprise, they had a wealth of classic gaming items on the second floor of the store. While many of the items were heavily marked up, I broke down and purchased 18 games for the Sega SC-3000 (a pre-Master System home cartridge system by Sega, circa 1984) and 12 for the Sega Mark III (Japanese Master System). I also nabbed a brand new Famicom 3-D Glasses and **Highway Star**, a 3-D Glasses-compatible rac-

ing game by Square, of all companies. After debating long and hard about a Famicom Disk system that they had for \$75, I finally decided to pass it up (I already have one in my collection). As far as Atari 2600-compatible games go, I only found one store that had games for it. In Japan, Atari briefly released the 2600 in 1984 and named it the Atari 2800. You'll recognize it if you saw one because it is aesthetically identical to the Sears Video Arcade II in appearance. To my utter dismay, they were selling 2800 cartridges for \$70 and up! I'm not THAT serious about collecting, thank you very much....

On Sunday, I was planning on checking out the local flea market in Meiji Park. To my disappointment, however, the Meiji Flea only takes place once a month at a predetermined date (usually the second Sunday of every month). Disgusted over my bad fortune, I headed back to Akihabara to make another round through the video game strip. Every Sunday, the main electronics strip in Akihabara is closed to traffic, and sidewalk vendors come out in full force, selling everything from Tamagotchi clones to walkmans and PC peripherals. Last year, I struck it rich by running across a vendor who was selling Famicom 100-in-1 multicarts for \$15 each. This year, however, I managed no such luck as my only gaming purchases for the day were a few Japanese-only 3DO and Mega CD (Sega CD) titles for \$3 each.



Someone cries out: "I can't read Japanese!" and is then dragged into a dark alleyway by local toughs.

While your luck (or lack thereof) may vary, any die-hard gamer who is fortunate enough to take a trip to Japan will not want to miss out on the

wonder that is Akihabara. If you're going for the deals, you might or might not wind up disappointed, but if you're looking for the old and hard-to-find, you have a pretty good chance of walking away with at least something interesting in your bag...

VIDEOTOPIA & CYBER PLAYGROUND

A SPECIAL REPORT ON VIDEO GAME EXHIBITS

BY AL BACKIEL

VIDEOTOPIA (at the Franklin Institute, Philadelphia 'til Sept. 7). I visited this site when it was running concurrently with Electronicon, the classic video game collector's convention (Aug 27-29) at the Airport Hilton. I had a terrific time by the way, at the show getting to meet video game fanatics like myself from all over the country and even beyond. Programmer Howard Scott Warshaw (E.T., Yar's) was the guest speaker. Kudos to Scott Crawford & friends for putting on a great show! Visiting Videotopia was like stepping back into a time warp. Every important milestone in arcade and home system development seemed to be represented by an exhibit. Some of the home systems were set up for free play. The arcade games required your buying tokens. Thanks to Scott, I did get some free tokens. The selection of games was quite extensive. I couldn't resist playing Nolan Bushnell's **Computer Space**, which was probably the first commercial video game (1971). It looked like some kind of alien creature in it's free-form, metal-flake, plastic cabinet. The graphics were understandably quite primitive. Everything was comprised of dots. The starfield background, spaceships, fire power. It resembled **Asteroids** before connect-the-dots. The game was not a big commercial success and this was the first time I had even seen one. Sitting right next to it was **Pong** which came out in 1972. I remember first laying eyes on this machine in a local bar, when it first came out. Needless to say, it became the center of attention. I spent hours challenging my friends to "just one more" for beers. Ah, misspent youth!

It seemed like the majority of arcade games were from Atari (**Stunt Cycle**, **Breakout**, **Warlords**, **Tempest**). There was usually some plaque nearby describing the games history and what innovations were introduced. The home systems ranged from the early Fairchild and Odyssey through today's Play Station and N64. It was nice to see the pioneer systems getting a little respect for a change. Also on display were the hand-helds and stand-alones. There was one exhibit that caused me to do a double-take. An exhibit showing the actual boxes for three 2600 games that were never released, but exist as prototypes: **Dumbo's Flying Circus**, **Tempest**, and **Donald Duck's Speedboat**.

The show is sponsored by the Electronic Conservancy and goes on the road from here. Leonard Herman, noted collector and VG author serves as a consultant. The only negative thing I found, was that the games seemed to be pumped up to high levels. Maybe it's just me slowing down with age. Look for it when it comes to your area. I think it is well worth the trip.

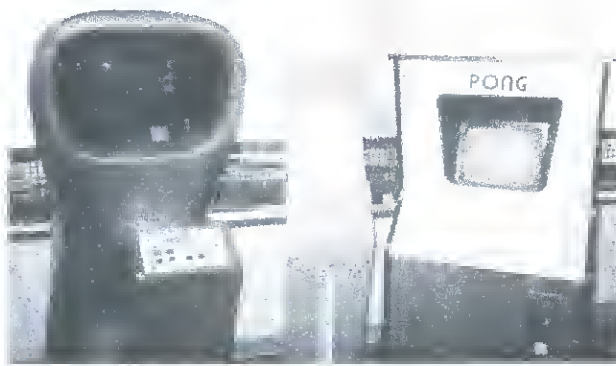
CYBER PLAYGROUND (at the Liberty Science Center, 'til Sept.9). Presented by Microsoft and Samsung. Similar to Videotopia except that all exhibits are set up for free play. You would think that would be better. NOT! A visitor would grab a machine and not let go. Hey it's free, so there was no restraint. Add that to the fact that the museum was packed and this was a smaller show and I think you get the gist. I was lucky to get to play **Centipede** for a while. One rotten, snot-nosed kid jumped right in front of me as I was reaching for **Tron**. You gotta be quick just to get a machine.

This show also had all the landmark arcade games. They did not have **Computer Space**. I think there was a full-sized **Pong**, but I'm not sure. I do remember that the home **Pong** was about the only game that was readily available. This show seemed to

stress computer systems more than game systems. There were more home computers at this show than at Videotopia. They had the **Kay Pro2** (1983), **Altair** (1971) which was one of the first home systems available), **Franklin Ace 1700** (1984), **Osborne I** (1981) plus some of the more common ones like the **Atari 800** and **C-64**. The plaque on the **Altair** states that when the system was first offered as a kit in *Popular Electronics* for \$385 or for an additional \$49? assembled, the first 4,000 units quickly sold out. All computers were set up with some sort of application. Both shows had the venerable **Vectrex**. Both shows also included a virtual reality demonstration. The one where you shot invisible basketballs at a hoop. The basketballs show up

on the screen via a transmitter glove which is worn by the subject. This show also hits the road from here. The biggest drawback is the crowds. Avoid peak periods, if you could. Another problem was that there seemed to be a higher number of systems/games that were down. I didn't see hide nor hair of any repairs going on. They should keep on top of this.

I went with my wife. She is not what you call a video game fan. She was more impressed with the Omnimax movie presentation of **Super Speedway** starring Mario Andretti. Picture yourself behind the wheel of a 200- mph Indy Racer. YOIKS! We also took in the **3D Laser Light Show** which was something new and unusual. The museum is one of those "hands-on", please touch, educational experiences for the kiddies, but adults might also enjoy the experience too.



Two of the original coin op "video games": Computer Space and Pong.

DIGITALPRESS PRESENTS: OUR 99 FAVORITE CLASSICS

We are often asked (collectively and individually), "what are your favorite games"? We've seen "The Greatest Games Ever" lists put out by other mags, and felt somewhat empty inside afterwards. It could be the alcohol... or it could just be that OUR list is the BEST. They're not "the greatest", "the most revolutionary", or even "the coolest", but we think they're the most FUN. Here then, in alphabetical order, are our 99 favorite "classics" of all time:



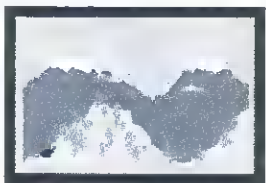
1) 2010 (ColecoVision) MARK: Tim Taylor eat your heart out. Great game concept. Fix different elements of a broken space ship before it crashes to a fire death on the moon of IO. On the upper levels where all repairs could not be made, I found the suspense of pushing the "Go" button a rush. Would the ship escape the moons gravity or would the strain pop more circuits?



2) Advanced D&D (Intellivision) JOE: This was the game that got me to buy an Intellivision. I have always been a fan of the TSR role-playing game (I still play), and although this is a loose interpretation, it is the randomness of the game – the surprises – that will always keep it near and dear.



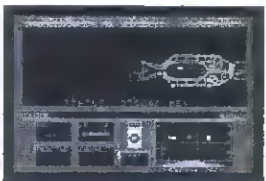
3) Adventure (2600/5 votes) KEITA: Adventure is arguably the most replayable adventure game because of its random skill setting on game 3. Everything from the bridge, bats, dragon and keys are in different locations for every game! Sure I enjoyed Final Fantasy like everyone, but it'll probably be another 5 years before I plug in FF for another go at it. RUSS: This almost made number one until I decided to "cheat" (see below). The game shows its age, of course, but it has charm and nostalgia like few other games. It's hard to believe I'd ever get tired of this game, even with its fairly limited options. MARK: This game, with its variety of levels and it's duel quest elements made it a long time favorite. It is not only the quest for the gold key and the grail, but a hidden quest for the secret room with the magic dot. SEAN: Ya gotta have it! THE classic adventure game of all-time! JOE: There's little I can say about this game that I haven't said before. It is quite simply the perfect example of video gaming spirit.



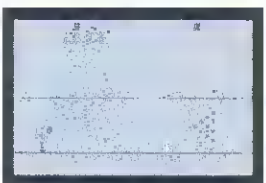
4) Adventures of Lolo, The (NES) AL: Looks too cute, cartoonish even. But, this whole series contains some terrific logic puzzles.



5) Antarctic Adventure (ColecoVision) JEFF: I think this is my favorite 8-bit racing game. Charming, relaxing, yet challenging.



6) Arkanoid (NES) AL: I always liked BREAKOUT. Call me "easily amused", if you must. This version has the largest variety of screen configuration plus a nifty, special controller.



7) Artillery Duel (2600, ColecoVision, Astrocade) SCOTT: My brother and I loved this game. It was a game where we could, non-aggressively of course, destroy each other over and over again!

8) Ballblazer (7800) SCOTT: You take your Rotofoil and become part of the Interstellar BallBlazer Conference (I.B.C) to play a futuristic one on one soccer. Competitions with friends and family were common with this game.

9) Baseball (Intellivision) SEAN: I was the MASTER at this game as a kid! Seemingly the game Intellivision was designed around – the keypads are perfect for it.

10) Battletoads (NES) - TONY: Incredibly difficult, even with the 5-live code and level warps. Light years ahead of its mundane, picayne, and moronic Super NES counterpart. Just about every level has its own unique twist, much unlike side scrolling beat-em-up contests.

11) Bomberman & sequels (TG16/4 votes) AL: Has several objectives. You must search for hidden items. You must clear all enemies by suckering them to fall into your traps. You must beat the clock. All the while being careful not to blow yourself up. RUSS: Bomberman 93 - I don't really picture this game as a classic (actually Power Strike and Super Sprint don't much either), and I feel weird for not having actually included it, but I will mention it here. It's great fun! KEITA: Bomberman 94 - Too bad this one never made it to the states, because it's the best version of Bomberman out there (save, perhaps, for SNES Bomberman 2, which is technically identical). If you have the means to pick this game up, by all means don't pass it up! JOE: All of the Bombermans are great "party" games! They never fail to entertain. I've probably logged more hours with Bomberman than any other game in the 90's.

12) Boulderdash (Atari 800) RUSS: A wonderful puzzle game. I put in a lot of time my freshman year of college, when I was actually using my Atari computer for a variety of things. There was one level I could just never crack.

13) Bounty Bob Strikes Back (5200) KEITA: Designed by Bill Hogue of Miner 2049er fame, Bounty Bob is one of the best sequels that nobody knows about (probably because it saw limited release for the 5200 and Atari computers). Every Miner fan owes it to themselves to check out this awesome closet classic that takes Miner 2049er to new heights!

14) Bowling (2600) SCOTT: Bowling is a simple game.. a ball, 10 pins and an alley. Even the 2600 couldn't mess that combo up. Still looking for that fabled 300-game!

15) Bump 'n' Jump (ColecoVision/2 votes) RUSS: Arcade version - My favorite game of all time. I know you were talking about home systems, but I can't neglect a true classic in my eyes. So I cheat and list it here. I LOVE this game, and for some reason I actually got fairly good at it – it's the only arcade game I ever rolled (both score and patterns, just never both at once). There was a local eatery back home, and I tried to play a game every time I went in, not to mention asking the owner if I could buy it whenever he happened to be in (no success yet). MARK: This translation was complete with the "hit no cars and get a 50,000 point bonus" trick. Fixed courses to memorize with random cars placement made the gameplay exciting.

16) Bumper Bash (2600) KEITA: You've gotta LOVE them paddle games! Honestly, how many BAD paddle games are out there? Bumper Bash is a pinball game that uses two paddles to control the action and is executed wonderfully. I'll take this over Midnight Magic.

17) Burgertime (Intellivision) JOE: As good as the Coleco-Vision version is, I spent countless hours on the floor of my bedroom back home trying to lick this one. I still hear the theme song playing in my head. Make it stop! Make it stop!

18) Circus Atari (2600) SEAN: One of the simplest concepts you will ever find, but to this day still not "modernized" on a more current system.

19) Contra (NES) - TONY: A shining example of the one (or two)-man vs. an entire army of enemies. Level creativity is nice and refreshing.

20) Devil's Crush (TG16) JEFF: The designers here didn't make the common mistake of trying to recreate a pinball machine on the TV screen. Instead, they blended videogame and pinball elements beautifully. Far more variety than any real pinball machine I've ever played.

21) Donkey Kong (ColecoVision) SEAN: Has to be the best pack-in game of it's era.

22) Double Dribble (NES) - TONY: Excellent for playing against another person. Cool slam dunk close ups and 3-point bomb sound effects.

23) Dragon Warrior (NES) SCOTT: This is the game that started me on turn-based RPG's. Granted the game music is a tad repetitive, but it started a trend in games toward the right direction:

24) Dreadnaught Factor (5200, Intellivision, Atari 800/3 votes) JEFF: 5200 version - A superb effort. Rare are shooters like this one that include genuine variety and strategy. The tension-level, pace, graduated skill levels are perfect, and by comparison, many modern games seem like beautiful-looking pieces of sloppy programming. Still waiting for that 32-bit update... RUSS: Atari 800 version - An intense game. I haven't played it much on other systems, but the game is a real thumb-killer on the computer. Did R-Type and it's ilk get the idea of the big boss ships from this game? JOE: Intellivision version - Isn't it funny that we all picked a different version as our favorite? All of them require lightning fast reflexes and a sound strategy - a combination few games require these days.

25) Escape From The Mindmaster (2600) RUSS: Simply a classic. Think and move, think and move. You couldn't really do just one or the other and expect to do well. Very well executed, and a sterling example of how the Super-charger improved on the 2600.

26) Final Fantasy (NES) SCOTT: This surpassed Dragon Warrior due to intricate storyline and the ability to play 4 (FOUR) characters at once. Many hours on this one.

27) Food Fight (7800) SCOTT: Chuck food at chefs who have nothing better to do than chuck it back at you! This game 'felt' like Robotron except the only person you were trying to save was yourself. It also had a great INSTANT REPLY feature.

28) Fortress of Narzod (Vectrex) AL: One of my very favorite shooters. Contains the added bonuses of ricocheting fire, varied levels and a tough boss.

29) Fortune Builder (ColecoVision) SEAN: This game was very advanced for it's time and falls into the simulation category which is rare for that era and my favorite genre of videogame.

30) Frogger (2600, ColecoVision/2 votes) AL: 2600 version - Freeway was fun, but Frogger has more elements which take it a step further. EDWARD: ColecoVision version - Colorful graphics with arcade-faithful music complements the classic gameplay we all know. This was the best home version.

31) Gremlins (5200/2 votes) KEITA: Gremlins gets my vote as the best movie licensed game on a classic system. The charming music and eye-popping visuals beautifully accommodate the frantic action of the game. EDWARD: A movie-licensed game that has great play value?!? This game is reason enough to own a 5200.

32) Gyruss (ColecoVision) EDWARD: That music! Oh my! Somehow the music makes the game... it fits the action like a glove. A real sense of urgency.

33) H.E.R.O. (2600/2 votes) AL: High playability. One of the best memorization tests. It somehow conveys the excitement of spelunking (cave exploration) and gives one a sense of discovery the further you got into the game. MARK: Oh the thrill of saving a person trapped in the lava walled, snake infested, poison moth ridden depths of unknown caves with only some dynamite and a heli-pack to aid you. A game simple to play yet difficult to master. I don't recall making thru level 18. Any one? Any one?

34) Ice Hockey (NES) JEFF: Compared to what we are playing today, 8-bit sports games really suck. But this one is still fun. I was please to see that one of the glossy mags named this as one of the "top ten sports games ever."

35) Incredible Wizard, The (Astrocade) JOE: This is probably my favorite game of all time. You can keep the one-player game, but there's no better "team up" game anywhere. The "pretend to team up" variation is always fun, too... heh heh heh.

36) Joust (7800) SEAN: For lack of a better version of my favorite arcade game of all time, I can deal with the 7800 version.

37) Jr. Pac-Man (5200) KEITA: It's a shame that Atari never released this game, because the 5200 version qualifies as one of the best arcade-to-home translations on a classic system. And unlike 5200 Pac-Man, the screen isn't "squished" to accommodate the TV.

38) Jumpman (Atari 800) TONY: I spent hours and hours exploring all the unique levels in this classic. Some had puzzles, others vultures, falling meteors, changing level configurations, etc. I loved the way your character fell and bounced painfully on every step and platform when he died.

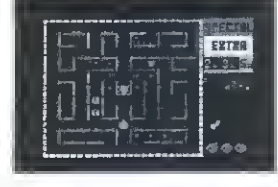
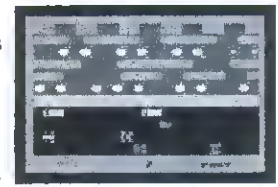
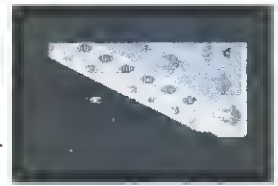
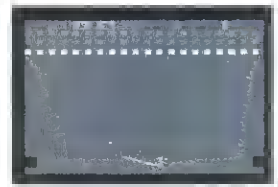
39) Kaboom (2600) MARK: A fast paced, no blinking, dry eyed, heart pounding spaz game that demanded total concentration. What's not to like? That and the fact that I excel at the game ranks it number one.

40) Karateka (Atari 800) - TONY: I seem to have a particular affection for old-fashioned chop socky games. Battle about a dozen guards, hawks, and avoid the spiked falling door.

41) Klax (TG16) JEFF: A very unique puzzler. So many different ways to stack the tiles—a great deal of gameplay strength here.

42) LadyBug (ColecoVision/3 votes) JEFF: Somehow mixes a lot of color and charm with great gameplay. It's great because it's NOT terribly intense - just involving. KEITA: Like Qix, Ladybug didn't fare too well in the arcades. By being ported to the home, however, it allowed gamers to realize the depth of play that was involved. One of many unheralded coin-op translations that proved to be popular on the ColecoVision. JOE: My favorite maze game of all time (and I was never really a maze game fan) still plays very well. Lots of goals make LadyBug a game to be beaten.

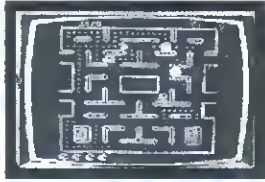
43) Legend of Zelda, The (NES) SCOTT: The original, the best overworld/underworld action RPG created. Later incarnations might have had better graphics and sound, but this one simply rocked! Damn, I spent a solid month trying to find the Silver Ring in Level 9, not to mention discovering





a SEQCND QUEST afterwards!

44) Legend of Zelda 2, The (NES) CLINT: This was the first Zelda game I played (I didn't get into the NES until pretty late, as you can tell), and it blew me away! Control was perfect, graphics were great, and the adventure aspect was really new to me at the time.



45) Lode Runner (Atari 800) - TONY: Dig holes to capture guards, collect treasure chests, scramble up ladders and maneuver across hanging ropes. Interesting level configurations included ladders which made up the Broderbund logo, and other hidden messages. Building your own levels was another plus.

46) Mega Man 2 (NES) SCOTT: This game started me on the Mega Man craze. It had rocking music (still good to this day!) and also has my favorite boss/weapon, Metal Man! Too bad I didn't catch Mega man when it first came out.



47) Megamania (2600) SCOTT: Although I did not play it much, I enjoyed it. My brother had frozen it at 999,999 and I have vivid memories of that. Where else can you shoot at tires, dice and bowties with a laser?

48) Metal Gear (NES) - TONY: This one would probably seem cheesy now, but I have fond memories of being strangely engrossed not only in the action, but the storyline as well. One major drawback, however, is that action seems to pause for a good 3-5 seconds after entering any room. Snake's Revenge was QK, but I sincerely wonder if the last boss in that game wasn't invincible. Anybody know?



49) Metroid (NES) SCOTT: At first, this game was a bit frustrating until I learned that I could use missiles. After that... I was under it's spell. The only thing that snapped me out of it was learning the Samus was actually a woman!

50) Microsurgeon (Intellivision) JQE: One of those rare weird games that I couldn't pull myself away from. It's slow and sometimes tedious but also mesmerizing.



51) Millipede (5200) KEITA: Yet another fabulous effort gone to waste by Atari's premature canning of the Super-System. Play it with the trak-ball and you'll agree that the 5200 edition is far and away the best version out there.

52) Miner 2049er (5200) AL: Best Electronics calls this the best 5200 game ever. I don't know if I would go that far. I do agree it is one of the best for the system. I hope to finish all levels someday. I always thought the central character looked a little strange though.

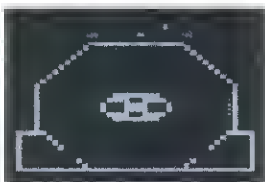


53) Minestorm (Vectrex/3 votes) SEAN: Although a clone of Asteroids, I find the added "fun stuff" make it a lot more interesting. AL: Asteroids clone with multiple levels. Totally challenging, plus it is susceptible to various strategies. JEFF: Fluid and addicting. Even more fun than its "father," arcade Asteroids.

54) Missile Command (2600/2 votes) JEFF: Captures the soul of the arcade machine. The fact that there is no trak ball is almost a strength - it makes it a different game. EDWARD: Addictive game play, just ask Cooper! No trak ball necessary.



55) Mountain King (Atari 2600) JOE: I always liked a game with an end goal in mind. Collecting gems, finding the hidden flame (by listening for it, a very nice touch), and racing to the top of the mountain is one of my favorite diversions. The "hidden kingdom", a section of the game that's either a glitch or an easter egg, is another reason to love this game.



56) Mr. Do! (ColecoVision, Atari 800/3 votes) CLINT: The title responsible for me buying a ColecoVision is still one of

my favorite ColecoVision games to play! EDWARD: Dig Dug copycat is arcade favorite of mine. It just keeps you coming back for more.

57) Ms Pac-Man (7800) JEFF: Simply a great version of a great arcade game.

58) Pac-Man (5200) JEFF: Give me that Masterplay Interface so I can use a 2600 controller, and this is just as good as the arcade game.

59) Pepper II (ColecoVision) JEFF: Very unique maze game; not at all a Pac-Man rip-off. I like the four different mazes, the unique goals that the games presents, and the perfect level of difficulty and levels three and four. Another one that could be updated successfully. Can you imagine Pepper III, with forty mazes?

60) Fantasy Star (SMS/2 votes) SCOTT: A game that was better than the original Final Fantasy? Wow! Did you see that? The enemies actually moved and appeared to attack you... sure beats flashing. In my humble opinion, the best game that ever came out for the Sega Master System. CLINT: Quite simply, the best game I've ever played. Challenging, graphically stunning and certainly for the time, the most in-depth game made. Still holds it's own against the "more powerful" systems RPG's.

61) Pitfall II: Lost Caverns (5200) AL: The 2600 version is great. But, on the 5200 when you finish, the adventure continues into a whole new radically different level.

62) Pitfall! (2600/2 votes) CLINT: By today's standards, this game would be considered dull and repetitive. But, when it came out, it was groundbreaking to say the least! I never did manage to get the perfect score, but I did score high enough to get the patch, which I still have (my first Activision patch, by the way)! AL: Amazing when it first came out. It still holds up today. A perfect score is still a goal of mine.

63) Power Strike (SMS) RUSS: I'm sure there are better shooters out there, but this is the first and only one of that generation that I really spent a lot of time with. It was really my first exposure to the whole "giant power-ups" type of game, and a lot of fun.

64) Punch-Out! (NES) EDWARD: Great graphics, tough gameplay make this cart attractive. The later fighters are no pushovers.

65) Q-Bert (2600) CLINT: Who'd have thought a game with one of the weirdest characters in a video game would have been so much fun? I remember the first time I played this game in the arcade. I was blown away! When the game came out on the 2600, I bought it the first time I saw it and wasn't disappointed at all (I didn't have high expectations back then, after all)!

66) Quick Step (2600) JOE: An incredible and unfairly overlooked game that takes Q*Bert to new heights - two players race to change the surface colors! Very fast and guaranteed to turn two friends into fierce foes.

67) RBI Baseball (NES) KEITA: Along with Baseball Stars 2, RBI showed that Baseball games didn't have to be boring simulations (i.e. Hardball). Sadly, many of the current games, while being graphically superior, are almost as boring as watching a Kansas City/Detroit game on the tube.

68) Reactor (2600) MARK: Kill the build up of atoms in the reactor before it blows up and kills millions of people. Qh, don't let's the side touch you or let the every growing middle push you into a wall. And "Don't Panic!!" AAAAAAAAAAAHHHHHHHHHH!!!!

69) River City Ransom (NES) JQE: Very few NES games kept me around, but this one has kept me around for hours

at a clip. Lots to do... it's part Double Dragon, part Zelda.

70) River Raid (2600/2 votes) CLINT: Although this title isn't perfect, it was the first shooter I played. And, after playing it, I wanted more games like it. AL: Very playable. Never boring. Challenging. I'm still trying to top my high score and hopefully roll the game over.

71) Robotron: 2084 (7800/2 votes) JEFF: Wildly intense. I heard a saying about this game: "you are two seconds from death at all times." Wrong. You're about a half a second from death. You won't be worrying about work, finances, etc. while you're playing Robotron. EDWARD: About as close as you're going to get on a classic system. Lots of movement... addictive shoot-a-thon.

72) R-Type (SMS) EDWARD: About the best graphics ever produced for the Sega Master System. Even with graphics aside, this game has all the elements of the coin-op. Great side scroller.

73) Rush N' Attack (NES) - TONY: A pretty taxing game. File this one under the 'x-axis tourism' genre. Kind of like Contra, Commando, or Rolling Thunder, but ammo is scarce. Armed with a knife, it's up to you to infiltrate the Communist base and annihilate everyone in your way.

74) Shark! Shark! (Intellivision/2 votes) SEAN: Shark! Shark! is one of the main reasons for my theory about two player games: it absolutely rules as a two-player game, but isn't much fun alone. Half the fun is eating the other guy's fish! AL: Big fish eats little fish and so on. Actually a clever game which is fun and at the same time illustrates the food chain or circle of life.

75) Slither (ColecoVision) MARK: This nearly perfect translation was an arcade fave of mine. The excellent game play with the roller controller help. One thing I love about this panic game is the fact that if you run out of time on one level it doesn't matter— They send out MORE snakes anyway.

76) Solomon's Key (NES) JEFF: Probably no one else will pick this one, but it combines puzzle solving with arcade skills unlike any other 8-bit game I can think of.

77) Space Dungeon (5200/3 votes) SCOTT: Along with 5200 Robotron, the only game what required the use of the joystick holders. I never was able to get the level 99, which was always my goal. Fast action! RUSS: I just remember this one being a combination of Robotron and an exploration game, and really digging the best of both worlds. I was never a big fan of the 5200 controllers, but they weren't too bad for this game. KEITA: This game quite possibly may be the ultimate "closet classic." The control mechanism is similar to Robotron, but this game differs in that it adds a healthy of strategy — do you exit the level with only a handful of treasure, or should you be greedy and further explore the dungeons for more... at the risk of having the Thief steal all your hard-earned treasure or, worse yet, dying without being able to cash-in?

78) Space Invaders (2600) EDWARD: The game that made the VCS sell millions. I could play this one every day. There are enough variations to satisfy any gamer.

79) Space Shuttle (2600) MARK: I loved the way this game incorporated all the buttons on the 2600 console. Although the game moves slow, your motion has to be constantly monitored so you don't fly off course. And the re-entry blackout was nerve racking. "Do I move the joystick? Do I not? Am I burning up? Hello, is there anybody in there? Just nod if you can hear me."

80) Spy Hunter (ColecoVision) JOE: An arcade favorite of mine, this was done much better than I expected on the ColecoVision. The action is dead on and the music is great. A commuter's fantasy game.

81) Stampede (2600/2 votes) SEAN: Original concepts get me every time. Although I only owned the Intellivision version as a kid, I think I like the 2600 version better now. MARK: This game was so easy. The cattle all have set patterns that you can plan on. Fast running ones then medium running ones then slow. Then the none moving black cow. If this game was so easy then why did the cow always win? I love this one for the "endless" barrage of cattle to capture.

82) Star Castle (Vectrex) JOE: A really simple game that requires a great deal of concentration. There's a real feeling of awe when the bad guy fires at you, and an equal feeling of accomplishment when you beat him.

83) Super Breakout (2600) KEITA: The ultimate variant of Pong, Super Breakout shows skill, imagination and loving care in its wonderfully simplistic design. Arkanoid has nothing over its ancestor.

84) Super Mario Bros. (NES/2 votes) JEFF: This still plays well and maintains a fun factor missing in some of the more complex platformers that it spawned. More than any of the others, though, the nostalgia factor contributed to my decision to add this one to my list. AL: Even after several sequels, I still prefer the original. This is a timeless classic. Most of the time even has Duck Hunt thrown in.

85) Super Mario Bros. 2 (NES) CLINT: When this title was released, there was no equal for it. Incredible graphics and some of the best gameplay a game has ever seen. In addition, this title really started the whole "secrets" craze (other titles before this one, including SM1 used warps and the like, but none as prominently as SM2).

86) Super Mario Bros. 3 (NES) KEITA: The original Super Mario Brothers gets the nod for being more significant, but part 3 is by far the biggest and best of the lot.

87) Super Sprint (NES) RUSS: This is just one hell of a fun game, at least up until the computer makes it impossible to win anymore. It is, of course, more fun with multiple players (like Rally on the Atari 8-bits). Me and my youngest brother logged a lot of hours trying to see how far we could go while one drove and the other tried to jam the computer players.

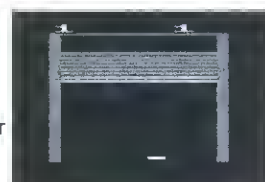
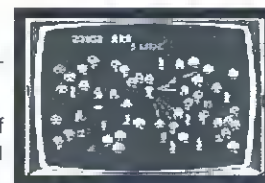
88) Tapper (ColecoVision/2 votes) EDWARD: I don't have to tell you that this cart has great gameplay. Good graphics and sound are a bonus. JOE: There should be more games with drunken slob in them! Although nothing comes close to the arcade version (complete with barstool and authentic railings), the gameplay is there on this one. Frantic.

89) Tarzan (ColecoVision) AL: My all time favorite CV game. Excellent graphics for the time. The action takes on land, through the trees and across water. Several objectives must be met.

90) Tetris/Tengen (NES/3 votes) JEFF: Has there ever been a more addicting videogame? KEITA: Talk about a game that has spawned a plethora of sequels and clones! Everything from Edtris to Bust-A-Move to Tetrisphere has been inspired by this timeless masterpiece. It's also one of the few games that will get women to play with you. AL: Highly addictive. The only other version I like is the Game Boy one, because it very handy for quick sessions.

91) Trog (NES) - TONY: Basically a 1990 version of Pac-Man, Ladybug, Mouse Trap, etc. Cavemen pursue dinos seeking eggs, and the neanderthals get tougher and tougher, devising fire, the wheel, pogo sticks, and other fun stuff.

92) Tunnel Runner (2600) SCOTT: Being a Pac-Man freak as it is, this game 'did it' for me. Challenging mazes,



(Continued on page 25)

rAnDm ReVieWs

IDOL SHISEN MAHJONG

Famicom

Hacker Int'l.

Puzzle



It's Keita.
Hide the funny
little tiles!

Here's a game from the ONLY Japanese company during the Famicom's heyday that attempted to sell uncensored games in Japan. Before discussing this game, a little about the history behind the company and its games....



Nintendo anticipated in the late 1980s that companies unwilling or unable to become licensees

would figure out ways to manufacture and sell Famicom games on their own. As a result, they added circuitry inside the Famicom and periodically modified the code inside new Famicoms so that only Nintendo-approved games could play.

This didn't stop Hacker International, which reverse-engineered Famicoms and figured out a way to make games that would work on them. And since Hacker didn't pay royalty or manufacturing costs to Nintendo, it was able to make a decent profit by selling their games via mail order (wholesalers refused to carry unauthorized products for fear of being cut off by Nintendo).

Nintendo's boss, Hiroshi Yamauchi, decided to retaliate against this renegade company that dared to sell games that were both uncensored and involved nudity and sexual themes. When Hacker placed ads in leading video game magazines, Nintendo immediately stepped in and ordered the publications to remove

them in all future issues. Despite these setbacks, Hacker managed to make a decent profit on their games.

Idol Shisen Mahjong is similar, if not identical to, an uncensored NES game, **Tiles of Fate** by American Video Entertainment. In this **Idol Shisen**, you are in a race against time to remove the Mah-Jongh tiles in pairs until the entire screen is cleared. In this respect, the gameplay mechanics are reminiscent of **Shanghai**, except for additional power-ups and slightly different rules which apply in the elimination of tiles. For example, brick walls, skulls and cross bones provide obstacles that can only be eliminated by acquiring power-ups that appear when certain tiles are removed. In addition, a time line at the bottom of the screen indicates the amount of time remaining - when your time is up your game is over.

Although the game is relatively easy in the early stages, **Idol** quickly becomes extremely challenging. Matching pairs become few and far in between, and

your concentration level must be at its highest in the face of the increasingly complex layout of the tiles. In other words, this is not a game that you want to sit down and play after chugging down a six-pack of Samuel

Adams. But then again, maybe it is....

The fun (well, for most of us anyway) really begins during the intermissions. And if you expected to witness some cutesy Pac-Man-ish cartoon scene, you're in for a (ahem) pleasant surprise.

As you progress further into the game, the girls begin to remove pieces of their clothing, one by one, until they're left with nothing else but their birthday suit. As they're a total of four different "Idols" and it takes about 3 or 4 intermissions for each girl to strip down to nothing, you won't be guaranteed to see anything unless you get the hang of the game. I've spent some decent time with **Idol Shisen Mahjong** and I'm still working on the second girl!

If you're looking for an addicting Shanghai-ish puzzler for your NES, **Tiles of Fate** provides it in spades. But for a double dose of entertainment, **Idol Shisen Mahjong** has no peer. Keep in mind, however, that only 15,000 copies of this particular game were made (and Japanese are notorious for throwing away old or unwanted items), so it's not exactly easy to find, even in Japan.



BATTLE HEAT

rAnDom ReVieWs

PC-FX

Hudson Soft

Fighting/FMV



**SHO-RYU-KEN!,
or something.
by Joe Santulli**

Element	Joe	Liz
Graphics	9	10
Sound	9	9
Gameplay	7	8
Overall	8	9

X

Multi-Player, Same Time

Decent Game Ending

Variable Skill Levels

X

Data Save Features

Hidden Stuff

Non-Linear Gameplay

One of my long-standing dreams in life is to be able to play a game where it feels like I'm in control of a fully animated character, like a cartoon. This is NOT the same thing as my other long-standing dream where I BECOME a cartoon character... more on that one some other time.



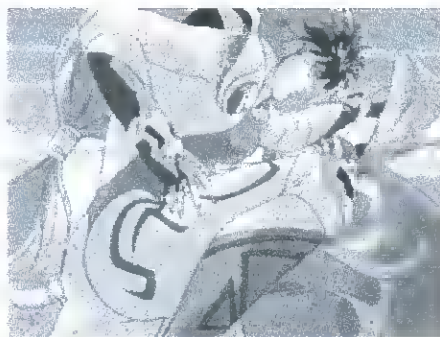
Hudson Soft has managed to do something that has been eluding most game designers for years. Namely, to do something useful with a CD-based system's ability to create full-motion video. I'm not opposed to FMV games, in fact I'm probably more tolerant than the next gamer. I grew up on *Dragon's Lair*, *Space Ace*, and *Cobra Command*, so attempts to improve the genre have at least been "interesting" to me. Not many people would give games like *Ground Zero Texas* or *Psychic Detective* a whirl, but I loved them. And replayability aside, I still think there are good games in the genre.

Battle Heat is best of both worlds, mixing seamless FMV action as an interface to its highly interactive fighting game engine. Many of the moves are pulled off via *Street Fighter II* mechanics, and the response is very tight. This isn't the first time a fighting game has been attempted with FMV: Sega gamers may remember *Prize Fighter* and *Supreme Warrior*. While neither of these games are total disasters, they severely lack the interactive element critical to fighting games. You need to punch, block, counter... feel every hit connect. *Battle Heat* does that, where others before have

failed.

The button sequence takes a little getting used to. The PC-FX has a six-button pad but they're not used for the typical punch/kick at light/medium/heavy doses. Instead, the top row of buttons goes Hard Hit/Jump/Special Attack and the bottom row goes Light Hit/Block/Taunt. Once you've become familiar with the buttons, the game really gets intense. Counter attacks are possible, as are combinations. You can jump attack. You can attack while a character is down. You can even attack as you're getting up from BEING down (I did this once or twice but can't seem to get the exact sequence). Sound like the elements of a good fighting game? It is.

The game screen is inset within a narrow border that contains the game title and a two-position sliding icon that shows if the characters



Now here's something I can really sink my teeth into... er, the game, that is.

are near or far (the only two distances you can be at), and their condition. If you see your character breathing heavy in the icon box, he's about to drop. As mentioned, full-motion video streams into the center portion of the screen. The artwork on this game is just beautiful! As good as any anime I've ever seen, the movements really bring the characters to life. When no one is attacking, the camera shifts back and forth between closeups of each player and an overhead of the battlefield. On each attack, you'll see an even smaller inset appear showing the attacker charging in. On each successful

block, you'll see the defender's eyes in yet another inset. All of the action and insets make it feel like you are controlling a mini movie. It really is a new experience.

I can't read Japanese but it seems as if these futuristic characters have been roaming the desert in two clans: "The Republic of Knph" appears to be the good guys; "The Holy Dark Empire" are the baddies. In tournament play you are The Republic. In Vs. mode you can choose a character from either side, but bad guys never fight bad guys and good guys never fight good guys. I guess there was a limit to the amount of video Hudson could get on one CD and all of those combinations probably would have broken it. Not a problem for me.

Moves are easily executed, and again, due to the capabilities of FMV many are quite dramatic. It's really cool to watch a character charge up and unleash a major attack. The ground swells, explosions fill the screen, and the defender is blown back in a blast of light leaving an indentation on a rock wall he's thrown into. You'll want to try every move just to see the video effects!

Battle Heat is considered to be one of the very best games for this system. It's a shame it will probably never see US consoles.



rAnDoM ReVieWs



Playstation

Squaresoft

Fighting



Review by "Mr.
Sequel",
Joe Santulli

Those of you who have been reading my work (and I use the term work very loosely) over the years know me as an "instant gratification" gamer - I'm really not one for long, drawn-out strategy games or complex thinking contests (I don't really have the brain capacity for the latter). As a result, the "fighting game" genre generally appeals to me, although I'm not very good at them. Last year, Squaresoft released Tobal No. 1, a fighting game that was light on textures but heavy on speed. Tobal No. 1 was very popular not just because the action was solid and intuitive, but also because it had a "quest" mode that combined the fighting with some exploration. Wow! A clash of two worlds! How did it all turn out? Surprisingly well.

It should be NO surprise, then, that Tobal 2 would be on my list of games to buy. I was a little put off by the fact that Squaresoft decided not to release this game here in the US (like they have something better to do! Feh!), but getting import games isn't really a big deal anymore so I plunked down the cash and bought the thing. It is moments like these when I wish I had learned Japanese instead of Geometry. Fortunately, the controls in this sequel are very much like those from the original. It's the little "winning pose" sayings the characters babble that makes me wonder... The quest mode is another story, there's lots of Japanese text there. What are they saying? Probably the

standard RPG crap that I usually skip through anyway. As it turns out, you can progress just fine without knowing the story. I made up one of my own which I'll have to share with you another time in another column, but to pique your interest I will tell you that it has something to do

Turn your back on me, will yo? I'll scratch yer eyes out!

with the scantily-clad character "Chaco" wanting to bed me down and bear my children. Only I'm a fighter, not a lover, so I put this activity off for as long as possible and instead engage in chatter with the local merchants and priests. Okay, so I didn't say it was a very good story.

As for the game, it is pretty standard fare for fighters. You have your basic high/medium/low attacks, combinations, and blocking. I've always been a fan of blocking by "backing up", a la Street Fighter II, but Tobal 2's method isn't bad - you can still press an attack button while blocking. There is a decent selection of fighters that stick with the tried and true. You have your basic karate guy, a karate gal, the super fast dude, super big but slow dude, old man with lots of tricks, etc. The artwork around these basic fighter types is outstanding, however. The humanoid types are standard enough, but the monster types are fantastic. Check out Oliems (looks

like an alien) and Ill (looks like a demon, perhaps Rosanne Arnold!) The fluid motion, detailed backgrounds, and high frame rate make the visual experience complete.

The quest mode is a vast improvement over



last year's Tobal No. 1. Instead of being confined to one dungeon, there are (at least) six different dungeons. The monsters within are more frequent and varied. You'll get all kinds of animals and humanoids as well as robots, undead creatures, underwater creatures, and lots of odd surprises. Each of these bad boys are animated with the same detail the main characters have, and best of all you can PLAY AS these monsters in tournament mode once you beat them in an encounter. I found that using them in tournament mode puts you at quite a disadvantage, since they lack the many moves of the main characters. Play in vs. mode against another monster (or friend playing as a monster), and you have rivalries that will probably never get old. I say that because there are over 150 different monsters when all is said and done. That has to be a record.

If you want to know if this game is "worth it", that's a no-brainer. Even if you've never liked fighting games before I promise this is a new experience, especially in quest mode.

Japan is so cool, and I'm just NOT. Here's where it gets depressing. Anyone know Japanese? It looks like everyone is having o really good time. Man, even the letters in Japan ore hip.

2冊のVジャンプボックスのトバル星を制覇せよ!!

フレインマニュアル

全キャラクターデータ充実!

トバル2の攻略本として、全キャラクターの技や属性、戦闘データなどを詳しく紹介。また、トバル2のストーリーや世界観についても詳しく解説。トバル2の攻略本として、全キャラクターの技や属性、戦闘データなどを詳しく紹介。また、トバル2のストーリーや世界観についても詳しく解説。

定価850円(税別)

ザ・パーフェクト

162に超えクエストモード!!

トバル2のクエストモードを完全攻略。全162のクエストモードの攻略法や、隠しアイテムの入手方法などを詳しく紹介。また、トバル2のストーリーや世界観についても詳しく解説。

6月下旬発売予定
定価1200円(税別)

クエストモード完全攻略!!
TOBAL No.1 情報も!!

Yar's Revenge



Atari 2600

Atari

Action



Served cold by
Joe Santulli

Element	Joe	Liz
Graphics	7	6
Sound	9	8
Gameplay	8	7
Overall	8	7



Multi-Player, Same
Time

Decent
Game Ending

Variable Skill Levels

Data Save Features

Hidden
Stuff

Non-Linear Game-
play



Here's a disturbing thought: Certain portions of my youth can *only* be recalled by playing or reminiscing about a certain game. Perfect example: I can't remember my high school Sociology teacher's name, but I can *vividly* recall my high school Sociology notebook: it had a giant insectoid head with the words "QOTILE DIES" below it, scratched deeply into the cover in blue ball point pen. What's even more disturbing is that this WAS a Sociology class, after all... what kind of an example must I have been to my teacher, wanting to exterminate an alien species like that? It couldn't have been politically correct, even in 1982. Yes, I'm sure that as major events occurred around me that semester they more or less became a part of my past that blurred into obscurity. But playing **Yar's Revenge** - and being part of the revolution against the evil Qotile - is one I event remember well.

Although I've never heard it stated publicly, I've always felt that **Yar's Revenge** was inspired by the Cinematronics' coin-op sleeper, **Star Castle**. The object is fairly straightforward: you're the good guy on the left side of the screen, kill the bad guy on the right side of the screen. The simplic-

ity of the classics still lure me in. No matter how complex games get today, very few reach the level of pure entertainment **Yar's Revenge** or others in its era achieved. With only one screen, seven objects, and solid programming Howard Scott Warshaw created what I believe to be his masterpiece.

The seven objects are the Yar, the cannon, the Qotile, his shield, a "neutral zone", a homing missile, and your bullet. The goal is to break apart the Qotile's shield by either shooting it with a bullet or consuming it, the latter of which enables the cannon. With enough of the shield removed, you can fire the cannon (which moves vertically in sync with your Yar) and hopefully hit the Qotile. Hit him and you're challenged to do it again, this time at a more challenging pace. While you're chipping away at the shield

you're constantly pursued by the homing missile. If it touches you, you die. The only place the Yar is safe is in the neutral ion zone, a scintillating vertical bar near the center of the screen. Oh, one more thing. Every few seconds, the Qotile spins in place then shoots out in your direction. If it hits you, you die.

After about five rounds of Qotile bashing, things really heat up. The homing missile gets faster, the Qotile leaves its base more frequently and ultimately begins to home in on you instead of flying out in a straight line. You are awarded higher points as levels progress. In fact, the scoring system here rewards

risk takers. You get more points for nibbling a shield than shooting it, and you get more points for destroying the Qotile in mid-flight than you would for just taking him out from his base.

I wouldn't put **Yar's Revenge** in my top ten, but it is definitely one of the true "quality" titles for the Atari 2600. It has stood the test of time, too. Recently I fired the game up on my home theater, with the sound on a high echo (I used the "stadium" setting on my system) and played like I did when my Sociology homework should have been done instead. For me personally, it also holds the honor of stealing away a fair portion of my youth, although WHY my guidance counselor never spoke to me about my hostility toward alien races is a mystery that will likely remain unsolved...



Here's a "fun fact" for ya - The Ion Zone and the Qotile are never actually on the screen at the same time! This was as close as I could get to seeing both in a snapshot.

And did you know that the Ion Zone is actual program code from the game dashing by in all sorts of directions? Amazing what those programmers could do with just 2K of ROM!

SG-1000

Sega

Arcade



By the
"mothership" of
game players,
Edward Villalpando

Element	Ed
Graphics	7
Sound	5
Gameplay	8
Overall	7



Multi-Player, Same
Time

Decent
Game Ending

Variable Skill Levels

Data Save Features

Hidden
Stuff

Non-Linear Game-
play

I love Sega arcade games. Whether it be Frogger, Subroc 3D, OutRun, Virtua Fighter 3 or Super GT, Sega rules the coin-op scene in my opinion. I've been playing Sega games since I can remember, and they always seem to get better each time. When Zaxxon arrived, I was blown away by the unique perspective and gameplay. Every machine I played on had the difficulty setting on high each time, so I was never able to see everything on the coin-op. Then, when news hit that the new ColecoVision system had a transition in the works, I knew I had to own it. The ColecoVision version was everything I wanted it to be and it was easier to get into, thanks to the difficulty level select! I was sold on the game and the system.

The Sega SG-1000 along with the SC-3000, were both released in

1983 in Japan. These now obscure machines had a large library of games, but not as many top arcade titles as you would expect. Za-



xxon, released in 1985 to the arcade going community, was sort of a "last hurrah" for these aging systems. If there was any game to spark interest in them, this would be it.

The premise is still basically the same as the versions you know and love: fly over multiple asteroids, shooting enemy installations and fuel bunkers. Ultimately you meet up with the Zaxxon mothership and blast it into oblivion, only to meet up with another asteroid and mothership with tougher defenses. Here is where THIS version differs

a little. An element from Super Zaxxon is thrown in – a dark tunnel. Also, you'll have to cross more than just two asteroid fields to get to the Zaxxon boss, so this game is no walk in the park.

Graphics are just about on par with the ColecoVision version (technical trivia: they both have the same graphics chip), but the SG-1000 version seems to have more detail in the walls and floor. The downside is that the movement is a little choppy, which has you yearning for the ColecoVision game's smooth scrolling. I don't care for the controls here either – push up to go up, down to go down... I much preferred the "flight sim" controls of the arcade and colecoVision versions. I could also do without the nagging tune that plays throughout. Overall, I'm pleased with this Zaxxon, I only wish Sega would give us an arcade-perfect emulation for the Saturn.

Wish List

How about an updated Zaxxon for Saturn with texture-mapped polygons and all new bosses? Better yet, make it for "Saturn 2" (Blackbelt)

Deja Vu

Zaxxon inspired a generation, there was nothing quite like it before its time. It appeared on the Atari 2600, Intellivision, ColecoVision, and just about every computer system in its day. Sega tried to update Zaxxon with Motherbase 2000 for the 32X but missed the mark.

Lite



Same great taste of DP Reviews but with fewer calories!

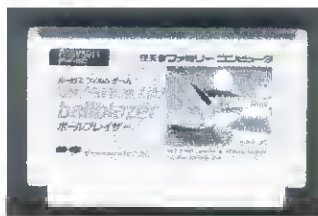
Ballblazer Pony Canyon, for Famicom

Remember Super Pitfall, the disastrous version of the 2600 classic done by Pony Canyon? Remember how you felt like ripping the heads of Pony Canyon's development team for making one of the most atrocious sequels of all time? Then maybe you shouldn't try Ballblazer for the Famicom, because this time you'll grant them no mercy.

For those who are unfamiliar the game, Ballblazer is a mechanized sport of the future that matches two athletes, each riding a light and maneuverable craft called a rotofoil. Each side's rotofoil cruises over the checkerboard playfield in a first-person view, trying to capture an elusive ball and either carry or blast it through the other contestant's goal pylons. On defense, the rotofoil is employed like a hockey or soccer goalie.

If you're expecting this Pony Canyon port to match Atari's offerings on the 5200 and 7800, you're in for a major letdown. The scrolling is incredibly choppy due in part to the low frame rate. In addition, the frantic pace has been slowed to a crawl, making it play more like a simulation than an in-your-face arcade action game. And the tremendous music and sound quality

that was a trademark in prior versions of Ballblazer has been significantly watered down. Only die-hard NES and Famicom collectors will want this one. — Keita Iida



3

Hyper Crazy Climber Nichibutsu, for Sega Saturn

A foreign game review is easy for me due to the fact that I only have one foreign game. "Hyper Crazy Climber" by Nichibutsu revamps the classic arcade original with a 90's flair. I am a big fan of the arcade and of the elusive Atari 2600 version so this review is very personal to me.

It starts with a Bomberman-style map screen that shows you an overview of the various spires to conquer. These include an underwater Atlantis like building, a medieval clock tower whose time telling hands are a hazard, a haunted skyscraper and even a beanstalk. (Obviously a hijacked idea from Mother Goose) All this and more to be tackled by three new characters, each with the usual strength/speed differences. But they are not without help on their race for the top. The addition of hidden power-ups like a time stopping clock and window shattering sticks of dynamite enhance your chances for survival. At the completion of the second climb the game gives you access to the center pagoda where you can, thru a coin op slot machine, earn extra lives and other items that lead you to a fast paced bonus level. Coins are awarded at the completion of each standard level.

All the old nasties are in place to impede your progress. Boxing Kong's,

a pregnant bird with dysentery (who thought up that combination), and even man-eating plants. The apartment dwellers armed with flower pots and bottles have been augmented with ghosts who drop hand tools at you and outer space aliens who throw lawyers out of a high rise. "Hey! They are good for something."

Yeehaw!!!! Ain't we got fun!?! If it sounds exciting there's a reason for it. IT IS!

Let's talk about gameplay. For those fans of the arcade the controls are dead-on. The transition from 2 joysticks to a direction pad and 4 buttons to control arm placement are done smoothly but nostalgia leaves you wishing for a hand held duel joystick controller (I hope someone from ASCII is reading this). The controls are still so good that I can't blame mistakes on the stick but only on my own haste.

All this and more challenge your dexterity in this steroid injected sequel. In conclusion the only things that would make this game even more enjoyable for me would be if they included the original Crazy Climber as a playable option and if I could read Japanese.

"GO FOR IT!!" — Mark Terry



10-Yard Fight (Irem Arcade Classics) Xing, for PSX

I know we've seen this one bashed in DP before, but I was hoping that the arcade emulation would prove that there was some merit to 10-Yard Fight. Regrettably, this was not the case.

10-Yard Fight is unquestionably one of the worst games I've ever played. This game makes other sports game duds like Punkshot, Main Event (if you consider wrestling a sport), Final Round, and Birdie King shine in comparison. I must admit that sports titles are generally not my favorite genre, but even if they were, I can't imagine deriving any enjoyment from this "classic".

Game play starts out at the High School level and moves up to College and Pros. After the kickoff, run as far as you can (to an incredibly monotonous army march sounding drum beat) inside a perfectly square row of defenders who all move in sync. Different plays are not selectable, forward passes are extremely difficult to execute, and your quarterback almost always laterals the ball. If you do succeed in scoring, it's on to the second half, where, oddly enough, your team receives again! How the end of the game is determined is a true mystery. I've had the ball intercepted (naturally resulting not in the other team's possession, but rather a 20-yard penalty) three times in the first half, then as soon as it happened in the second half, game over. Another time, I was at the fifteen yard line, was tackled in the end zone (which should have been a TD or at the very least a first down), when out of nowhere... game over. How an extra point is determined is another wide open question; my only option is seemingly a two point conversion.



Sights and sounds are as primitive and simplistic as anything released in 1980 or 81 (which, considering that this was released in 83, is inexcusable). I can barely make out the crude wails of "ready! 1st down! hut! hut! hut! hut! hut! hut! hut!" before every play. The yards are very big, although the computer opponent is generally a snap to out-run, out-smart, and out-maneuver. He is also an exceptionally gifted pass interceptor. Inconsistencies such as these fit in perfectly in this game. What I'll never understand is why on Earth anyone would waste their time to convert this to a PSX disc. I guess for the same reason Dragon Buster, Grobda, and all those other rotten obscurities were resurrected for the Namco Museum series. This game is almost worth playing just to see how far video games have progressed in sports simulation. Almost. - Tony Bueno



Better known to the world as Rygar, this is the Master System version that never made it to these shores. Unlike the NES version, this is an action-oriented contest (as opposed to an action/quest game). I haven't had much time to play this game seriously, but what I have been able to see so far proves it is a fun arcade-style game. I wish they would have done more with the graphics, though... your main character seems kind of small and there is not parallax scrolling. It also would have helped if Salio added FM sound support, although the music is acceptable as is. A cool game overall (8). - Edward Villalpando

Elevator Action (2) Returns: Sega, for Saturn

Well, since this is the first article I've written for DP, I thought I should introduce myself. I'm Clint. Been into the classics thing for quite a while (my dad bought a Pong and the rest was history) and just joined the DP staff recently (or so Joe tells me). I'll primarily be covering the SMS and handhelds, as those are my main areas of interest (that aren't covered in this 'zine already, anyhow), but occasionally, I'll have to rebut Sean's Rompage article, 'cuz the guy has no idea what he's talking about. Anyhow, my first article is on Foreign SMS games, so here goes:

America really lost out when it comes to the Master System. A little under 200 games were released in the US, and approximately double that were released worldwide. Why? Plain and simple, the system wasn't successful over here. But, on foreign shores, the story is much different! Most foreign games were released in all foreign areas, although, each division of Sega - Sega Europe, TecToy (Brazil), and Sega Ozisoft (Australia) etc. -- had total control over what they released in their respective countries. This leads to some titles that were only released in Brazil, Europe, etc. I've been compiling a list of all the foreign games for about a year now, and although information isn't easy to come by, I have managed to obtain a pretty large list of titles. In this first article, I'll go over some of the highlights and lowlights.

The original Elevator Action game (arcades and NES only) was a game that always intrigued me, but I could never get anywhere with it. I loved playing it, but could never quite get past the first "level". That is not the case with this title. The original concept remains intact, go through the building, shoot the bad guys and enter doors to pick up points and items (since the game is in Japanese, I don't know if you're picking up the same things as before), but other than that everything is different. There are now 3 characters to choose from, 2 men and a woman, each with their own strengths and weaknesses. One of the men is slow, but has stronger fire-power and armor, the woman is fast, but has weaker armor and average fire-power, and the other man is about average in all aspects. There are also several different enemies, ranging from dogs (who was the genius that decided to let dogs be shot?) to men in flack jackets that shoot at you with flame throwers. The weapons for your character have also been beefed up. You can now pick up several different weapons including grenades, flame throwers, machine guns and shot guns



as well as several different power-ups such as shields and the like. The game does suffer from repetitiveness, especially at the "boss" times, when you have to fight 30+ of the same bad guy to get to the next stage. I also wouldn't consider the graphics to be "32-bit", but the animation of the characters more than makes

up for the lack in graphics. Other than those two negative points, this game is a lot of fun, but I'd rent it first to make sure it's not too repetitious for your tastes. - Clint Dyer

Arugosu No Jyuji-Ken Salio, for Sega Mark III/Master System

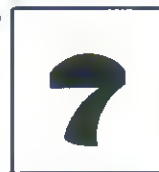
PD Space Invaders (Ultraman characters) for Sony Playstation

I rented this title, because I like Ultraman and the game looked interesting enough, but I honestly didn't expect



much from it. I figured that even if the Ultraman game wasn't great, it did have the original version of Space Invaders on it, so it wouldn't be a complete waste of money. I was pleasantly surprised by what I found. First of all, there are 4 different versions of the original space Invaders game. All the arcade machines are represented, including the standup and 3 cock-tails. Each one is an exact representation of the arcade machines, right down to the color overlays on the screens. But, the fun doesn't stop there! The updated game is

pretty cool also! It's the same premise as the original (shoot everything) with updated, 3-D graphics (though you can choose to play in the original 2-D view if you wish). Instead of a ship at the bottom of the screen, there is an SD Ultraman character that shoots towards the back of the screen at several different types of enemies, all presumably enemies from the Ultraman series. As you progress through the levels, Ultraman changes costumes, which doesn't affect gameplay, but does break up the game graphically. The graphics, although kid-ish, aren't bad, and the scaling effects when you hit enemies and the enemies enter the screen are different. In addition to the one player action, there is a 2-player head to head game, where 2 2-D screens are set next to each other and the first person to die loses. The game could use more power-ups (I've never seen anything except invincibility, though that doesn't mean there aren't more), much like Super Space Invaders. If you can find a copy of this game, I'd definitely suggest picking it up, as it's a great game to play and will keep you occupied for quite a while. - Clint Dyer



Gussun Oyoyo (Risky Challenge) Xing, for Japanese PSX

A game that is little known outside of Japan, this one was recommended to me by Eric Boghos, a reader in Austria. Utilizing gameplay mechanics from Tetris and Lemmings, the object here is to construct a bridge to an exit for a baby who may only climb one block at a time. Several monsters, each with their own unique abilities, will attempt to prevent our young hero from reaching the elusive exit. Your options are a) maneuver the blocks so that the monsters can't touch



the kid (this can be difficult if not impossible when dealing with slugs who simply slither around the blocks or little green demons who actually materialize from the blocks themselves) b) squash the monsters on the ground or against the wall (which won't work against the dinosaurs with horns) or c) dispose of them with the randomly dropped bombs, which may also be used to alter the configurations of previously set blocks.

If all that weren't enough, you've also got spikes, bottomless pits, and a constantly rising water level that will drown the poor tike if you don't lead him to safety fast enough. Food and Power ups including a stopwatch, invincibility, and an item to lower the water level are here also. Levels get very creative, including a spiked staircase, maze which must be completely bombed out before the exit is reached, and a level in which you must let the water level fall before the exit may be reached are a few examples. Gussun Oyoyo isn't one of my favorites, but it is a nice change of pace game to pass the time. -Tony Bueno

Chex Quest ID Software, for IBM P/C

DP has done reviews of PC games before when we saw a game we thought would be of interest. Chex Quest falls into that category. First of all, it's free inside specially marked packages of Corn/Wheat/Rice Chex. I believe that this is the first time that a CD-ROM or any other software media was the giveaway in a box of cereal. How can they afford to do this you are probably wondering? Well, CD's are much cheaper to manufacture than cartridges. I believe I heard it was only 50 cents. The biggest overhead is the development, but that's a one-time charge. Also Ralston Food is not in this deal alone, America Online is also on the same CD with their start up package (50 free hours for signing up). It amazes me how AOL is still pushing for more customers when they can't even handle the traffic they have now. You do not have to join AOL to play this game. It is not online, but runs in Windows 95 & MS-DOS that you setup and playback with the CD.

What you get basically is a Doom clone with full screen animated movie clips at the beginning and end of the game. The hero looks like Buzz Lightyear ("Toy Story") wearing waffle armor. The villains are the Fle-moids which look like green amoebae. This was done to make it seem less violent. The weapon is the Zorch, which looks like a fancy remote control. You fly in your rocket ship to the planet Bazoik, working your way from the landing zone through the various rooms. The graphics are not as crisp and clear as Doom or Duke Nukem. But hey!, what do want for nothing? The opening clip is a rather strange, campy piece of animation that sets up the game scenario. You must clear each level to proceed. You can call up maps. You have to pick up supplies to survive. Nothing new as far as game play as far as I can see. There are one or more bosses that can appear mid-level. So it is a good idea to seek out the

heavy artillery ASAP. I have stumbled my way thru 3 levels. I do not know how many exist. But, each level is fairly extensive and requires finding color-coordinated keys to open some doors.

There is a amusing inter- mission in which our local hero scrapes off the "slime" from the bottom of his boots. He uses a

spoon, which also functions as the last ditch weapon. If you quit the game, you still get to see the ending sequence. All in all, this is a nice game with decent graphics. The programming was done by Id Software. I still prefer to play games on a dedicated system rather than a PC. A PC is too expensive to take the rough treatment I dish out in the heat of battle. A lot of times I accidentally hit the wrong key and jump out of the game temporarily. - Al Backiel

Monsterworld IV: Sega, for MegaDrive

Anyone who has played Wonderboy 3 (SMS) or Wonderboy 5 (Genesis) would instantly be familiar with this title. For those not familiar with those two games, the object is to get through the "levels" to get to the next town or find your next quest. Between the levels, you'll encounter

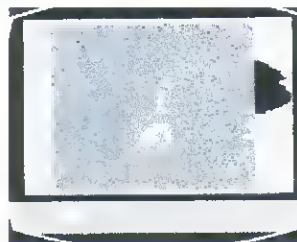
monsters that attempt to stop you from completing this task. When you defeat the monsters, money appears, which you can pick up to get new weapons, armor, etc. at the next town. The fighting is all real-time - you press the button and your character swings his sword or throws magic to hit the enemies and

the action in this game is fast paced and intense! In WB 5 and WB 3, control was a bit sluggish. This problem has been taken care of and I would consider the control to be perfect! The graphics in this game kill the graphics in all the previous versions. The colors are brighter, the graphics are more crisp (although still cartoony) and the animation is top notch. The number of weapons and armor seems to be about the same as WB5, although I didn't finish the game, so I don't really know how many weapons there are. The best thing about the Wonderboy series is the puzzles you need to solve in order to progress in the game. In WB 3, you had to change into different "monsters" with special powers in order to progress to certain areas. In WB 5, you had to play a musical instrument in order to get doors open and make it to a boss, and puzzles like this abound in this title. Unfortunately, the game was released in Japan only, so unless you can read Japanese, a lot of the puzzles and quests are all but unsolvable. If you can find this title and aren't afraid of the Japanese text, I'd definitely suggest picking it up! - Clint Dyer



Raiders of the Lost Ark Atari, for Atari 2600

The Atari 2600 has, essentially, three categories of games: 1) the great ones; 2) the bad ones; and 3) the technically superior (but not necessarily great or bad) ones. While many will argue that ROTLA is a "1", by my standards I call this one a "3". Warshaw's masterpiece is Yar's Revenge.



This game is a frustrating "adventure", where you have to perform actions in a particular sequence. Certain mistakes will cost you the game, and some of these mistakes feel "cheap" when they happen to you. It is, however, an amazing game in that it was done in 4K of ROM. Again, Warshaw displays his talents by creating an entire world with very little elbow room of his own. Like Yar's Revenge, the graphics, sound, and effects are top-notch... at the very top of his class, in fact. But unlike Yar's Revenge, this game feels very out of control.

For example, you've just dodged that snake near the marketplace, so you're going to head up to the entrance room to explore. You step off the screen, ZAP! YOU'RE DEAD! The snake was right on top of you as you walked in. It's easy to see WHY this happens, but that doesn't make it any more fun to play. Instead, you just have to figure a way around these anomalies until you ultimately solve the game. There are lots of objects and hidden stuff (the Yar even makes an appearance if you drop the Chai while falling from the Mesa cliffs), but everything always happens in the same order. Once you've beaten this game, there's no reason to return to it.

No one will call ROTLA a "bad" game, but I certainly won't put it near the top of any of my lists. From the Warshaw library, I personally prefer the glitches and surprises of E.T. and the brilliant design of Yar's Revenge to this one. - Joe Santulli



Super Space Invaders Domark, for Sega Master System

Another version of Space Invaders (sense a theme in my reviews?). This one takes the original concept behind Space Invaders - shooting upwards at advancing aliens and goes a few steps further with new power-



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ups, aliens, etc. The power-ups are really cool. The range from a bullet that shoots through an entire row of aliens to double or triple shots, which can hit more aliens with one shot. At the end of each 3 levels, there is either a special "bonus" screen, where you try to shoot aliens before they pick up your cows or a boss

stage. Bosses are bigger aliens that take more hits to defeat and shoot stronger weapons at you. The graphics are nothing special, in fact, they haven't been updated much at all, but the backgrounds are nicely drawn, which makes getting to new levels more rewarding. And the cow bonus levels are hilarious. There's something in this title for everyone.

Space Invaders purists can play the game without picking up the power-ups and those that are new to the Space Invaders library (are there any people like that) get a good game to play with cool power-ups and interesting twists over the original. If you want to play this title and don't have access to a Master System version, you might want to look for the Genesis (Space Invaders '91 is the same basic premise, with slightly updated graphics and more weapons) and Game Gear versions of the game, although both are pretty difficult to find. — Clint Dyer



Bank Panic Sega, for Master System

This is one of the few card games I've played that I actually liked! The object is simple. Shoot a certain number of bad guys before the timer runs out while protecting customers who are depositing money in the bank. Each level gets harder and harder and the bank robbers you have to hit come faster and faster. In order to complete levels, there are several things you have to keep an eye on. At the top of the screen, there are indicators that tell you which of the 12 doors the bank robbers are going to appear behind and when they are going to be there. A marker points to how close a bad guy is to the door, and you have to go to the correct screen before the bad guy gets the customer's money. Also at the top of the screen, is a timer that tells you how long you have before the round ends. If it runs out, you lose and have to start over again. The action in the game takes place in the middle of the screen, where the doors are. Each screen has 3 doors on it, and the doors open up to reveal Bank Robbers, customers or innocent bystanders. Shoot the bank robbers and a customer will appear and give you money or power-ups. If



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you take too long, the bank robber shoots you or if you shoot an innocent bystander, you lose a life. In addition, sometimes, customers will appear holding up their hands. To get past these guys, you have to wait a few seconds and the bank robber will appear, then you have to shoot him. Control in the game is very interest-

ing. Since the SMS control pad only has 2 buttons, they used them for the right (button B) and middle (button A) door and in order to shoot at the left door, you have to press right on the controller. It was pretty difficult to get down hitting a direction to shoot, but once I did, it was natural. It's simple, challenging and contains enough variety to keep the game moving along nicely! — Clint Dyer

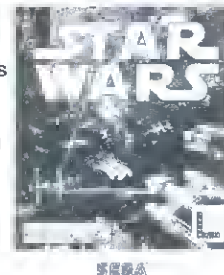
Super Turrigan Imagineer, for NES (Europe)

Why this game never came out stateside is a mystery to me! There were ads in EGM and other magazines stating that it was "coming soon". Well, Europe got it, anyway. This is a tough (actually, very tough) platformer with many surprises. Unlimited continues help out, but getting deep into this game will depend on your skills and reflexes. At times, so much is going on that you just feel like calling it quits! Careful planning is needed. It's not impossible... through trial and error a patient gamer will get far into this game. Unfortunately, I'm not one of them. I'm not very

patient so getting to the second level is an accomplishment for me. I'm sure that if I put everything else aside and devoted my life to Super Turrigan, I could finish the game. I like what I see in this brilliant game, it just makes me wonder what's on the later levels. The music is very good (on the NES, no less!), and the graphics are acceptable. If you have a Euro contact, ask for this cart. (8.5) — Edward Villalpando

Star Wars US Gold, for Sega Master System

This title is one of the most sought after Master System games, and rightfully so. It's Star Wars! But, above and beyond that, it's one heck of a game! For those familiar with the NES version of the game, this game will be very familiar for you. You start off as Luke, driving (hovering?) around Tatooine on your Landspeeder. On the main map are several hazards such as gun turrets and Banthas that you must avoid to find the areas where Luke can get out of his Landspeeder. When you find the areas and exit the Landspeeder, the game turns into a side scrolling action game. In these side scrolling areas, you will find your friends (Han, R2, Obi-Wan, etc.) who will all help you rescue princess Leia, who (surprisingly enough) was captured by Darth Vader. When you rescue Han and Leia, they become useable characters, and each of them have powers that Luke doesn't. After rescuing Leia, and disarming the Tractor Beam, the game changes again, this time into a first person shooter. The object here is to navigate the Millennium Falcon through an asteroid field, while shooting Tie fighters to

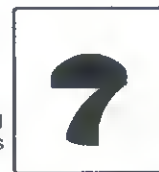


reach the rebel base at Yavin. Once there, you get in your X-Wing and have to destroy the Death Star to end the game. Graphics throughout the game are top notch. When you rescue your friends, you see a huge (in terms of 8-bit anyway) pictures of them on the screen, as they tell you what to do next.

Luke himself is extremely detailed for an 8-bit character, and the graphics overall are slightly above average for a side scrolling adventure. The control is a bit hard to get used to (the characters "slide" a bit), but overall, it's not distracting enough to ruin the game. Perhaps the biggest downfall in this game is the challenge level. It's HARD! Getting through the side-scrolling portions of the game take a LOT of practice and patience. Other than that, this game has everything that a SMS game player could want! — Clint Dyer

Wimbledon 2 Sega, for Sega Master System

Tennis games have always been some of my favorites to play, and this one is one of the best for the 8-bit systems. The game is loosely based on the Genesis game of the same name, and fortunately, the gameplay from the Genesis game is still intact. In addition, almost all the options from the Genesis game are here. Tournament or match play are both included, match play being for learning the game and tournament play being for playing through a tournament with a character you create. In match play, you can choose easy or normal difficulty, which makes a huge difference in the speed and difficulty of the opponent(s). There are 16 men and 16 women you can choose and options such as court type (lawn, clay or grass) and singles or doubles. The game itself is (three quarter) view, with one player at the top and one at the bottom (or two at the top and two at the bottom in doubles). You can play 1 player against the computer or another player, 2 players against 2 computer opponents or 1 player with a computerplayer against 2 other computer opponents. The action, playing in normal level, is fast and furious, probably too fast for beginning players, though there is an easy mode for beginners to get down the basics of the game before being barraged with the normal level. Serving the ball, on the easy level, is simple - it's impossible to hit the ball out of bounds.



On normal level, serving is more difficult and requires precise timing to hit the ball in bounds. Graphics are decent for an 8-bit game, although certainly nothing breakthrough. The players are animated nicely, but the colors seem a bit drab. The sounds in the game are less than exciting, but other than putting in an announcer's voice to call the score/etc., there's not much that can be done for the sounds. This is certainly not the best tennis game I've ever played, but it's better than any other SMS tennis game! — Clint Dyer

The Master System game was brilliant, so Takara had to do its best to mimic the success for Nintendo as closely as possible. I think the hardware limitations put a real damper on their goals. Flicker and slowdown appear all over the place (especially during the boss sequences), and the scrolling is nowhere near as smooth. The game itself is not as colorful as the SMS version, and the backgrounds are lacking detail. With all of that said, the game is STILL fun to play, I guess because it's the same Sega game at heart. (7) — Edward Villalpando

Space Harrier Takara, for Famicom

Released in 1989 for the Nintendo Famicom, Space Harrier — the popular Sega coin-op — shows the weakness of the system's ability to do 3D.

Bomberman: Hudson, for Saturn

(Continued on page 25)

Coop De Grace

Our resident teacher Jeff Cooper gives us yet another lesson on videogaming

Who among us hasn't fantasized a bit about owning a home arcade stocked with the classics? Can you imagine a game room featuring Galaga, Pole Position and Pole Position II, Centipede, Pac-Man, Ms. Pac, Missile Command, Breakout, Dig Dug, Joust, Defender...

Thanks to the arcade classics series for the Playstation, all these games (and more) are available for the home, making the dream close to reality for us. But at the same time, it's been almost like a cruel joke. Why? Because although these games appear arcade-perfect, many of them are virtually unplayable. And the reason for this is the absence of any arcade-quality controllers. Breakout, for example, is simply unplayable on the Playstation with a joystick or a pad. And the Pac-Man series has been nothing more than an exercise in frustration. I tried five different high-dollar Playstation joysticks with Super Pac-Man and couldn't find one that would consistently allow me to make a left turn. Every time I played, I lost at least half of my lives to joystick malfunction. Pole Position is a nothing game without the precision provided by the steering wheel. They say a system is only as good as its software. Well, a game is only as good as its controller, and I've stopped playing many a title because I couldn't find a workable joystick.

Finally there has been a breakthrough that has practically revolutionized gaming in the Cooper household. Two new controllers have appeared in stores that have "fixed" the classics and improved a whole bunch of new games, too. They are the Maximizer, by Nyko, a conventional joystick, and the NegCon controller by Namco, a peculiar little analog device.

You'd never guess the Maximizer is anything special to look at. It's pretty standard fare for a wide-based joystick; in fact, the selling hook is supposed to be the fact that the fire buttons are placed on a wheel that you can rotate to position everything just so. But the real key is that the Maximizer doesn't seem to have the leaf switches employed in almost all recent joystick controllers. It doesn't have that "clicky" sound and feel. Leaf switch controllers work great for fighting games but they are constructed for eight-way (or maybe sixteen-way) movement. Consequently they don't work well for games requiring four-way movement: when you try to turn left or right, the controller too often reads a diagonal. For whatever reason, the Maximizer does not have this problem. It's not perfect, but with a little practice, it allows the Pac-Man games, Dig Dug, and others to come very close to the arcade experience. On Super Pac my average score doubled within a half hour of plugging in the Maximizer. This controller is inexpensive (\$20-\$30), and the funny thing is that I'll bet neither Namco (whose classic games

are now "must buy") nor the manufacturer Nyko is aware of the reasons why this controller is so important. By the way I've tried the Maximizer on "modern" releases and it seems to work well for them, though I don't know that it is an improvement over leaf switch controllers.

The NegCon from Namco analog controller is a strange, but indispensable little item. It looks more or less like a standard control pad. You hold it like a control pad. The difference is that it twists in the middle. Useful especially for driving games, you turn right by twisting the controller away from you (or twisting the right side of the controller toward the TV screen) you turn left by twisting the controller toward you (or twisting the left side of the controller away from the TV screen). Since it's analog, the more you twist, the more you turn. The fire buttons are analog, too, so they work pretty much like gas pedals — the harder you push, the more you get.

For a change, I'll be brief and direct. The NegCon controller works great, and makes most driving style games (Pole Position, Ridge and Rage Racer, Wipe Out, Destruction Derby, Need For Speed II) much more fun. The first game I tried with the NegCon was Ridge Racer; within a few minutes my times were way faster than anything I had gotten in the past. And though I haven't tried it, I'm told that games like Breakout work perfectly with the NegCon.

One word of caution: though sealed, my NegCon came with no instructions. This is amazing, because you MUST ADJUST THE CNTRDLLR for every game. Somehow the Playstation "reads" the fact that the NegCon is plugged in, and if you watch the screen carefully as you set up whatever game you've booted up, you'll see options for adjusting the sensitivity of the NegCon. The first time I played Ridge Racer I played at the NegCon's default setting and fish-tailed uncontrollably all over the track. This had me questioning the sanity (not for the first or last time) of editor Santulli, who had recommended the NegCon to me. I stumbled onto the fact that by following on-screen directions you can adjust the controller several ways. It took a little experimenting, but before long I was tooling along just great. I have not tried the expensive steering wheel set ups, and for all I know they could be even better than the NegCon. But the NegCon is certainly far less expensive (around \$30) and it is a helluva lot more convenient than dragging out a steering wheel, pedals, etc.

To sum it all up — the biggest videogame news for me in the last several months hasn't been any particular game but the discovery of these two controllers, which has made the games I already own a lot more fun!

ROMpage!

featuring
Sean Kelly

Settle Down, People.

Ahhhhh...feels good to be back on paper again! Same situation applies for me whether we're on the web or paper though - I'm never at a loss for something to write about. I was kind of getting panicky though as I'm cutting it a little close here, but as usual, one of my fine collector friends came through for me and gave me an idea. I can't say that I don't enjoy making Joe sweat a little though. :)

In wading through my Spam-filled email box, I ran across some fairly disturbing email. It was from a fellow collector who had bid in an auction of mine but lost out on the item he wanted at the last minute. In this email he used phrases like (names changed to protect the psychotic) "Jim Shoo can BURN IN HELL", and "I was so paranoid that I thought there was a conspiracy going on between you and Jim Shorts", and of course "I have tested some of my conspiracy theories", to name but a few out of a 10k message (that's 10,000 typed characters for those of you computer-less readers). There were several frightening realizations brought on as a result of reading this message probably the most of which is the fact that this person was serious! *Burning in hell* may be an insignificant thing to some of you depending on your religious beliefs, but put yourself in a Catholic's shoes for a moment and consider the ramifications. This person wished an eternity of suffering on another human being just because he lost his chance to get a videogame he wanted!

Of course the idea that the message was sent out of rage crossed my mind, but when his reply to my response to his original message echoed the same feelings, either this person has a problem dealing with his anger, or he was in fact, serious in his original message. This leads me to the second frightening realization that came out of this message. He is not the first one I have heard talking like this by any means.

A number of times in the past I have heard from people so "depressed" because they hadn't found any new games for their collection in a while. Or you have the guy so desperate to talk to people about his games and such that when nobody is interested in talking to him, he seeks out their home phone numbers and/or addresses so he can call them at 4am or mail a constant stream of letters just to be an asshole. What about the guy that offers \$200 over the asking price of a game in an effort to get you to screw someone else out of what should rightfully be theirs. And I should probably make mention of the WOMAN that sent me email calling me names these virgin ears hadn't even heard before because she had missed the deadline to make an offer on something and I wouldn't accept her bid.

Yeah I know some of you are yelling out "Welcome to the real world Sean" right into your issue of DP, and making quite the spectacle of yourselves I might add, but are you serious? I realize that all walks of life are present in any aspect of life, but I

had always innocently thought that even psychos took off their psycho hats in at least SOME areas of their lives. That even they had something they felt comfortable enough with to relax a little and try and have a little fun.

Some of this collecting stuff has undeniably gotten out of hand. If you were to pick up a cartridge listed as a 10 on the ScarceOmeter in the DP guide, I don't think many people would blame you for seeing the dollar signs in your head and trying to decide if you would rather have the cart in your collection or the cash. It's a tough choice sometimes! Now if you were out cart-hunting and found out someone had been in the thrift store five minutes before you and walked out with a rare Miss Piggy's Wedding prototype, would you seek this person out and axe-murder him or her?

I know I've said this before but I'm going to say it again, this is supposed to be FUN! If at any point it's no longer fun for you, it's time to move on and do something else with your spare time. I've come up with something of a videogame collecting psycho test here. This is for amusement purposes only, but if you find yourself with more than half the boxes checked, maybe it shouldn't be for amusement purposes in your case.

Mark an 'X' in any box that applies to you in regards to your game collecting antics:

☐ I religiously search for videogames more than four times a week.

☐ I occasionally do without something I need in order to spend the money on a videogame I want.

☐ I have spent more than a week's pay on videogames in a single week.

☐ I have lied to my wife or "better half" about the money I spend on videogames. (Yeah, this one should probably get PRINTED with an X in it)

☐ I have made a trade with another collector that was knowingly very much in my favor only because I knew more than they did.

☐ I have misrepresented the rarity of an item of mine to another less-knowledgeable collector so as to get more for it.

☐ I try to keep tabs on my local collecting competition so I can beat them to our mutual scrounging haunts.

☐ I have bought or bid on a videogame that I didn't need or want just so someone else couldn't get it.

___ I have bid on items in auction I didn't need or want with the sole intention of raising the price so as to make it appear more valuable.

___ I get genuinely depressed when I haven't found any new games for my collection in a while.

___ I have left wantlists with local thrift stores or the like in an effort to get them to hold new arrivals for me out of view of other customers.

___ I have intentionally tried to spoil another collector's reputation with a mutual source for games to keep the source from dealing with him or her.

___ I have made sources aware of the potential value of certain games in order to "win points"

___ If offered a price equal to two month's salary for a game I only have one copy of, I would not sell it.

___ There is at least one game I would pay an entire week's paycheck for.

There are fifteen questions above. Now if you see more than ten X's on your checklist, you can probably count on a free lifetime membership to the videogame psycho's club. If you have more than 7, you're borderline and better watch yourself. Less than seven and you're probably not all that different from most collectors. Again, this "test" is intended for amusement only, but it does make some interesting observations now doesn't it?

This "test" came as an after-thought to the point of this article which is "lighten up people!" Let's have some fun here and quit being so obsessed with it. Even if you don't collect to play and you just collect for nostalgia or something to do or whatever, it really shouldn't be as important as some of you seem to have let it become.

(Continued from page 23)

When I play a game that has come from roots on lower end systems, I expect quite a bit of new stuff, updated graphics and new gameplay twists. Unfortunately, this title isn't much more compared to the other versions of the game. For those unfamiliar with the other versions of the game, it originated on the Turbografx system and has been done on just about every system in existence since then (NES, Genesis and SNES). The object of the game is simple. Blow up blocks, trees, etc. to get to the other guys so you can blow them up before they do the same to you. Blowing up certain blocks will allow you to gain power-ups that will help you achieve victory. There are power-ups that increase your blast range, let you kick bombs to where you want them to be and allow you to place more than one bomb, among others. This game has always been best played as a multi-player game. All of the previous versions have allowed 4-player support where 4 players can go at it head to head and blow each other up. Gameplay wise, this version is no different from the previous versions, the power-ups are all the same and the only thing that has been updated are the

graphics, and even those are nothing to write home about. It does, however, support up to 8 players, which is nice for parties and such, but with 8 players, it's extremely difficult to keep track of what's going on and you end up blowing yourself up more than in a normal game. The game isn't the worst Saturn game I've played, and for parties, I'd definitely suggest it, but overall, it's a rental at best. Look for an American release before Christmas. And let's hope they put a little more effort into it.

- Clint Dyer



(Continued from page 13)

random mazes (thanks to the RAM PLUS!) and the 3-D perspective made this one a definite winner!

93) Turbo (ColecoVision) EDWARD: When I first played this, I could not believe how colorful it was. Great 3D effects.

94) Video Pinball (2600) MARK: I love pinball and this early video version is no exception. Big points could be had if you had the stones to nudge the table a little and build up bonus points and bonus "x" multiplier. I always tried to count my bonus points because I heard that if it exceeded 255 counts that it reset to 1. That's a lot of work for a whole lotta nuthin'!

95) Warlords (2600) KEITA: Almost a decade before Bomberman was being hailed as the ultimate 4-player game of all time, I was enjoying some of the most epic all-night Warlords sessions with my friends. It's really a toss-up between Warlords and Super Bomberman 2 (SNES) and Bomberman '94 (PC Engine) if you're looking for some multi-player party action.

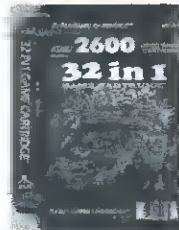
96) Worm Whomper (Intellivision) JOE: One of the coolest games ever made. Not only does WW show off the Intellivision's great graphic capabilities (easily 50 or more moving objects on the screen at once), but it runs fast!

97) Xevious (7800) EDWARD: Would have been great in 1984 if it were released! Very faithful to the coin-op, and much better than the NES version.

98) Yar's Revenge (2600/2 votes) SCOTT: A game that stole many hours away from my teen years. Simple game play yet containing that addictive 'Kill or be Killed' premise. Easy to find, easier to play! CLINT: This title occupied my 2600 for longer than any other 2600 game. I was obsessed with getting to the last color (no, I never made it, but I had fun trying). Just pure clean fun for the 2600.

99) Zaxxon (ColecoVision) EDWARD: Back in 1982, it was hard to believe that a game could be this good. Arcade action at its best.

100) YOU TELL US! What one "essential" game is "missing" from our list? Write us or email to digitpre@ix.netcom.com.



Special thanks to Phil Dispenza and Clint Dyer for these updates

FOREIGN GAME RELEASES

- ❑ **Bobby Geht Heim {E}**.....Taiwan 6
aka Baby Go Home (TV Boy)
aka Bobby Geht Nach Hause
aka Bobby Is Going Home
aka Jumping Jack
aka Labyrinth

Label in the scheme of Mr. Postman Taiwan D, but the cart on the back does not have 2 holes on either side like Mr. Postman.

- ❑ **Boom Bang {E}**.....Starsoft..... 4



aka Cracker Pot
aka crackpots

Taiwan release with black label and original artwork.
Some variations do not have S.S. on the back of it. REPLACEMENT

- ❑ **Commando Raid {E}**Carrerre Video .. 6
#USC1004 (c)1983

- ❑ **Die Hungrigen Froshe {E}**.....StarSoft 4
aka Frogs 'n Flies

StarSoft games can sometimes be identified by a large "SS" on the back of the cartridge casing. Some variations have a cart which looks like the Starsoft version but does not have S.S. on the back. REPLACEMENT

- ❑ **Dragon Treasure**Taiwan B..... 4
aka Dragonfire

A Taiwanese ripoff packaged in a cheap looking red box with large letters "2600 COMPATIBLE". Artwork on box and cart label match. REPLACEMENT

- ❑ **Earth Attack**Taiwan B..... 4
aka Defender

A Taiwanese ripoff packaged in a cheap looking red box with large letters "2600 COMPATIBLE". Artwork on box and cart label match. REPLACEMENT

- ❑ **Feuerwehr im Einsatz {E}**Taiwan 6
Aka Fire Fighter

Same label and cart type as Landung in der Normandie (same color label/picture scheme), but the cart itself does not have S.S. written on the back.

- ❑ **Laaser Voley {E}**.....Taiwan B..... 6

aka Laser Gates
aka Laser Volley
aka Tunnel Battle (TV Boy)

A label variation of Laser Volley, same game, same label minus error.

- ❑ **Mission 3000 {E}**.....Taiwan D..... 6

aka Asteroid (TV Boy)

Label in the scheme of Mr. Postman Taiwan D, but the cart on the back does not have 2 holes on either side like Mr. Postman.

- ❑ **Pete Rose Baseball {E}**..... HES 7
Identical to the Absolute version, on the back of the soft vinyl case (about video cassette size) is imprinted "Home Entertainment Suppliers".

- ❑ **Phantom Panzer {E}**..... Taiwan D 6
Aka Tanks But No Tanks

Label in the scheme of Mr. Postman Taiwan D, but the cart on the back does not have 2 holes on either side like Mr. Postman.

- ❑ **Schnecke Gegen Eichnormchen {E}**..... Quelle..... 5

aka Fancy Pot (TV Boy)
aka Snail Vs. Squirrel



- ❑ **Sesame Offne Dich {E, V}** Quelle..... 5

Aka i want my mommy
Aka Open, Sesame!



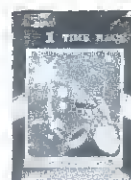
- ❑ **Space Jockey {E}** Carrerre Video .. 6
#USC1001 (c)1983

- ❑ **Strahlen der Teufelsvogel {E}** Starsoft..... 4
aka Atlantis

Taiwan release with gray label and original artwork. REPLACEMENT

- ❑ **Tanzende Teller {E}** Quelle..... 5
aka Dancing Plate
aka Dancing Plates
aka dishaster

- ❑ **Time Race {E}** StarSoft..... 4



- ❑ **Weltraum Tunnel {E}** StarSoft..... 4
aka Space Tunnel
aka Weltraum-Tunnel

- ❑ **Weltraum-Tunnel {E}** Quelle..... 5
aka Space Tunnel

- ❑ aka Weltraum Tunnel

FOR SALE: Nintendo 64 Star Fox (sealed) \$40; 2600 Blueprint - \$5; 2600 Mogul Maniac (no end label) - \$8; 2600 Revenge/Beefsteak Tomatoes - \$5; 2600 Spiderdroid (sealed) - Instructions, Box, \$8; 5200 Congo Bongo - \$5; CLCO War Room - \$9; IBCD 7th Guest (sealed) - Instructions, Box, \$20; IBM Sound Blaster Pro w/Speakers - Instructions, Box, \$20; INTV Blockade Runner - \$7; ODY2 Quest for the Rings (some pieces missing) - Instructions, Box, \$15; SNES Mortal Kombat II (sealed) - Instructions, Box, \$12; TG16 R-Type - Instructions, Box, \$10; VECT Armor Attack - Instructions, Box, Overlay, \$12. Prices include shipping to US locales. Joe Santulli, 44 Hunter Place, Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442.

FOR SALE OR TRADE: VCS Mr. Do!, Shootin' Gallery, Beat Em And Eat Em/ Lady In Wading, Spy Hunter; 5200 Frogger II, Robotron w/controller holder, Mr. Do's Castle, Gyruus; 7800 Water Ski, Midnight Mutants; ColecoVision Illusions, Star Wars, War Room Tapper, Intellivision Demonstration Cartridge, Fathom, Blockade Runner, Draughts, World Series Baseball; SG-1000 Lode Runner, Champion Pro Wrestling, GP World; NES Drop Zone, Pac Mania, Qix, Maxi15. Many more games and systems available. Write for list. Edward Villalpando, 13525 Utica St, Whittier, CA 90605.

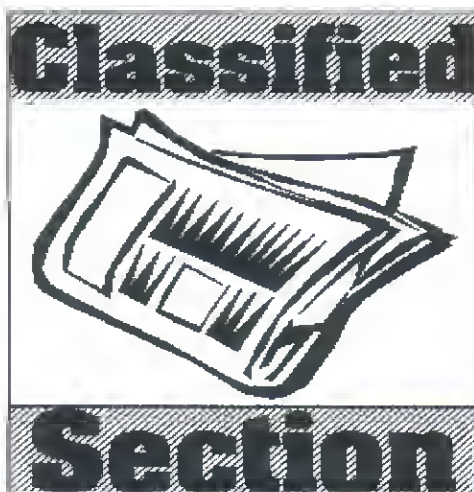
WANTED: Q*Bert, Pac-Man, & Frogger memorabilia: Write: Rich Fenick, 1081 Merillon Ave, Westbury, NY 11590.

INFOCOM GAMES and other classic adventures for sale/trade in "Ye Olde Infocomme Shoppe". Also buying individual pieces for collections, whatever you've got. Complete grey-box packages \$12-\$20. I also have Infocom props, catalogs, folios, and titles from Rainbird, Level 9, Broderbund, etc. For current stock, check <http://netnow.micron.net/~jgoemmer/infoshop.html> or send SASE to: CE Forman, 404 South St, Lacon, IL 61540. Mention this ad and get free shipping! I also collect/trade Vectrex items.

FOR SALE: sega master system with 20 games 3-d glasses, gun and 2 cons 75.00. EMAIL: KATOM96@aol.com

FOR SALE: Atari 5200: 3 Controllers, 1 Space Age Joy Stick (Proline), 1 Trackball 2600 Cartridge Adapter, 2600 Paddles, 2600 Joy Sticks and Lap Boards. Games: Pac Man, River Raid, Frogger, Qix, Defender, Pitfall, Pitfall II, Pengo, Jungle Hunt, Baseball, Super Breakout, Star Raiders, Joust, Pole Position, Magamania, Tennis, Space Shuttle, Vanguard, Missile Command, Countermeasure, Q-Bert, Centipede, Kangaroo, Berzerk, Mountain King, Dig Dug, Space Invaders,

Classified



Section

Digital Press Classifieds are FREE! Hook up with your fellow collectors - send us your wants and sells today!

Blueprint. 2600 Games: Zaxxon, River Raid, Trick Shot, Casino, Reactor, Enduro, Breakout, Midnight Magic Ms. Packman, Backgammon, Gangster Alley, Circus Atari, Night Driver, Combat, Turmoil, Chopper Command, Berzerk, Video Chess, Grand Prix, Skeet Shoot, Demons to Diamonds, Video Pinball, Video Olympics. EMAIL: Niteowl904@aol.com5200.

WANTED: Atari 400 games wanted! I am looking to buy or trade for atari 400/800 games. I have many 2600, 5200, and intellivision games for trade. A list can be seen at <http://pilot.msu.edu/user/reicher6/2600.html>. If you have any games for trade e-mail me at reicher6@pilot.msu.edu.

FOR SALE: Sega Genesis II w/ sonic \$30 shipped. SNES Super Metroid w/ box & instr. in mint condition \$16 shipped. 32X Cosmic Camage & Doom w/ boxes & instr. in mint condition \$10 each shipped. Mega Man: The Wily Wars for the Mega Drive w/ box & instr. in mint condition \$28 shipped. Dynamite Headdy for Genesis w/ box & instr. in mint condition \$15 shipped. Virtual Boy games w/ boxes & instr.: Galactic Pinball, Panic Bomber, Red Alarm, Teleroboxer. All are \$7 each shipped first class. Jaguar games w/ boxes & instr.: Doom, Hover Strike, Syndicate. All are \$10 each shipped first class. Atari Lynx system w/ Pinball Jam \$20 shipped; Atari 2600 games: King Kong-cart only \$10, Coconuts-cart only \$7, Racquetball-cart only \$6, Sorcerer-cart only \$6, Taz-cart only \$7, Spiderman-sealed! \$8, Air Raiders-sealed! \$8, Atari 5200 Super Cobra w/ box & instr. \$7. SNES games w/ boxes & instr.: Final Fight, Gradius III, Mortal Kombat. All are \$10 each shipped first class. Email me at: SSur-

mick@aol.com or write me at: Shawn Summick, 25 Truman Court, Boyertown, PA. 19512 All prices include shipping in the US.

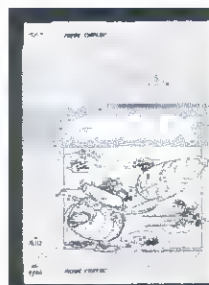
WANTED: I am looking for a Turbo Express system as well as a Turbografx-16 and Turbo Duo. Im also looking for these turbo chips: Parasol Stars, Splatterhouse, Bonk 1 2 and 3, Bomberman 93, Jacky Chans Action Kung Fu, New Adventure Island, Pac-land, Chase HQ, Air Zonk, R-Type, and Space Harrier. **FOR SALE:** i have a NES and 31 games. Please email for list of nes games and offer a bid for all or individual, also if you have any of the wanted items email me. EMAIL ADDRESS: finalfighter@hotmail.com REGULAR ADDRESS: Andrew Goodenough 2950 Hylane Dr. Troy, MI, 48098

VIDEO GAMES: buy, sell and trade for all system write to Po Box 242 Shermansdale Pa 17090 or e-mail me at to get on mailing list. katom96@aol

WANTED: I am in need of any kind of system or game that anyone wants to sell! From ATARI 2600 to N64. Please e-mail me at: jasonkeel@pdi.net or call at (405) 623-4854 ask for Jason. Thanks alot!

GAMERS! Come visit Comic Relief for your Atari, Colecovision, Intellivision, and other video game needs!!! Located in central NJ at 1655-134 Oak Tree Road, Edison, NJ 08820 732-494-2343 in the Oak Tree Shopping Center.

WANTED: Looking for an original Intellivision Master Component in excellent condition. Also looking for games that include the box(good condition!) and overlays with instructions. Please email with any info!!! EMAIL: Cirrus67@aol.com.





DIGITAL PRESS
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The Digital Press Classic Video Games Collector's Guide is now going on it's fifth edition and along the way has incorporated many, many opinions other than just the six collectors that put together the original issue. We've made many changes, additions, and deletions, but the one thing we couldn't do on paper is add **pictures**. Enter the DP-CD! Over a year in the making, the DP-CD is nearly complete...

The CD is designed as much more of something you will sit down and spend days on end strolling down nostalgia lane. While it definately is a reference work, the paper version is more readily accessible to most people. It's like having a set of encyclopedias on CD-ROM and on your book shelf. If you want to look up something really quick, you're probably going to reach for the bookshelf as opposed to firing up the computer.

Here are just a few of the highlights:

- Over 1000 game box scans!
- Over 1500 game cartridge scans!
- Over 600 typed instruction manuals!
- Over 1100 screenshots!
- Never before seen hardware such as the laptop 2600 or the miniature 5200!
- Over 100 *secret* inter-office Atari memos written by the likes of Carol Shaw & Bob Whitehead!
- More memorabilia than you can shake a stick at!
- Digitized TV commercials! At present we have around 35 of them on the disc with more coming.
- Emulators! We have permission to include an emulator for nearly every classic system.
- Dozens of magazine cover scans, sound bytes, Windows 95 backgrounds, clip-art, large-size overlay scans for printing, technical info, you name it and it's there!

This project is a *NOT FOR PROFIT* venture on our part. We will be selling the CD for only what it costs us to produce it. While we have a fairly good idea what it's going to cost, we can't set a price in stone just yet. More than likely, however, it will be less than \$20 plus shipping.

MORE INFO NEXT ISSUE!



Digital Press is dedicated to the memory of my best friend, Kevin Oleniacz. Kevin's spirit will be with us through every homing missile shot, knockout punch delivered, and finish line crossed.

Play recklessly. Think positively. Live **EVERY** moment to the fullest.